

If you are a Christian you are a saint. That doesn't mean you are perfect. It doesn't mean we should have a statue made or start wearing a medallion with your name of it. But it does mean that you have been set apart by God to fulfill His special purpose.

There are three great philosophical questions in life: 1) Where do I come from? 2) Why am I here? and 3) Where am I going? Today we will focus on the second question, "Why am I here?" Three times in these few verses, Paul says that we exist "to the praise of God's glory." Look at the first part of verse 6. Look at verse 12. Now, look at verse 14. It says that the "purchased possession" (**Say, "That's me"**) should be "to the praise of His glory." You and I exist to give praise to the glory of the Lord.

Praising the Lord is the greatest form of witnessing that there is. When you die one day, wouldn't it be great that the one thing people most remember about you is that you were constantly praising God?

How great is our God?

When I am afraid, He is my courage!
When I am broken, He puts me back together!
When I am blind, He makes me see the light!
When I am hurt, He heals me!
When I am hungry, He feeds me!
When I am lost, He is the way!
When I am knocked down, He lifts me up!
When I am weak, He is the strength of my life.
When I face trials, He gives me joy!
When I face loss, He restores my soul!
When I face persecution, He is my shield!
When I face pain, He comforts me!
When I face Death, He will carry me Home!
He is everything for everybody, everywhere, Every time,
and every way. So, if you ever wonder why I feel so secure in Him, understand this... He said it...and that settles it.

I. WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BECAUSE HE HAS BLESSED US WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN CHRIST. (3)

A. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "IN CHRIST"?

For a moment, substitute the word "Congress" for Christ. What does it mean to be "in Congress"? It means that you have been chosen to be there. It means that you are a member of that legislative body. It means that you have been given a position of considerable authority and responsibility. It means that you are accepted as a part of that select group. It means that you now experience privileges that don't belong to just anyone, certainly not those outside Congress.

B. UNDOUBTEDLY, WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT ALL THOSE BLESSING ARE, BUT WHAT ARE SOME OF THEM?

1. The forgiveness of sins.
2. Eternal life and Heaven.
3. The privilege of prayer.
4. Freedom from the penalty, power & presence of sin

C. THIS PASSAGE THRU VERSE 14 IS A LISTING OF JUST SOME OF THE BLESSINGS WE HAVE BECAUSE WE ARE IN CHRIST.

II. WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BECAUSE HE CHOSE US IN CHRIST BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. (4)

A. BEFORE YOU WERE EVER BORN OR WERE EVER ABLE TO MAKE ANY CHOICES, GOD SET HIS LOVING EYES ON YOU.

Jane used to sing a song called "I Should Have Been Crucified." What a powerful message! I should have been crucified. I should have suffered and died. I should have hung on that cross in disgrace. But Jesus, God's Son, took my place. All that was done by God before anyone else even knew you would ever exist.

Rev 13:8

B. HE DIDN'T CHOOSE YOU AT RANDOM. HE CHOSE YOU IN LOVE, ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND PLAN.

C. HE DIDN'T JUST SETTLE FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE THE BEST HE COULD GET.

You have been chosen by God. And you weren't His last choice. He loved you before you ever existed.

D. HE CHOSE YOU WITH A GOAL IN MIND... TO MAKE YOU HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME BEFORE HIM.

III. WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BECAUSE OF HIS UNCHANGING PLAN TO ADOPT US INTO HIS FAMILY. (1:5)

A. YOU HAVE BEEN PREDESTINED TO BE ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY.

Our questions are about the past. Predestination is about the future. It should cause rejoicing, not arguments about things we don't understand.

B. THAT MEANS GOD PLANNED IT LONG BEFORE HE DID IT.

C. THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD'S PLANS AND OURS. OURS OFTEN FAIL, BUT HIS NEVER DO!

D. THAT SHOULD GIVE YOU A GREAT SENSE OF SECURITY. YOU AREN'T GOING TO MESS UP GOD'S PLANS FOR YOU.

E. THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOUR CHOICES DON'T MATTER, IT JUST MEANS THAT GOD WILL SUCCEED IN BEING GLORIFIED IN THE LIFE OF EACH OF HIS CHILDREN.

F. HE ADOPTED US TO HIMSELF THROUGH CHRIST.

G. ULTIMATELY, WE WILL BEAR THE FAMILY LIKENESS.

Romans 8:29 says “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

IV. WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BECAUSE HE HAS MADE US ACCEPTED IN CHRIST. (1:6)

A. MANY PEOPLE SUFFER FROM THE REJECTION OF OTHERS. HUMAN ACCEPTANCE IS VERY LIMITED AND VERY CONDITIONAL. IT CAN DISAPPEAR IN A MOMENT.

B. HE HAS ACCEPTED US BY HIS GRACE THROUGH WHAT JESUS DID FOR US (NOT WHAT WE’VE DONE FOR HIM).

V. WE SHOULD PRAISE CHRIST BECAUSE HE HAS REDEEMED US THROUGH HIS BLOOD. (7)

A. HE HAS REDEEMED US FROM SLAVERY TO SIN BY PAYING AN AWESOME PRICE, SUFFERING AND DYING AT CALVARY.

Apolutrosis - How did people become slaves (debt). Redeemed from slavery. Auction block.

B. REDEMPTION INCLUDES THE FULL FORGIVENESS OF OUR SIN DEBT.

VI. WE SHOULD PRAISE CHRIST BECAUSE HE HAS GIVEN US AN INHERITANCE IN CHRIST. (12)

A. OUR INHERITANCE WAS PREDESTINED TOO.

1. Predestination is primarily about God’s plan for our future, not about what He did in the past.

B. OUR INHERITANCE IS RESERVED IN HEAVEN (1 PET 1:4)

1 Peter 1:4 says it is ... an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you...

C. JESUS SAID THAT WHERE OUR TREASURE IS, THERE OUR HEART WILL BE ALSO. (MATT. 6:21)

VII. WE SHOULD PRAISE HIM BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE GUARANTEE OF OUR INHERITANCE (13-14)

A. HE HAS SEALED US. IT’S LIKE A WILL THAT IS STAMPED WITH AN OFFICIAL SEAL OF AUTHENTICITY.

B. HE IS THE EARNEST OR DOWN PAYMENT ON OUR INHERITANCE.

All of these blessings are for those in Christ, all because of his sacrifice of Himself at Calvary.

Ephesians 4:1 - I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

I love the scene at the end of the movie *Saving Private Ryan*. Ryan, who is now seventy years old, returns to Normandy, and he is looking at the grave marker of Captain Miller, the man who died to save him during World War II. Ryan is on his knees. The grave marker is a plain, white cross. He talks to Miller, now long dead: "I've tried every day to live up to what you did for me ... I hope I've lived a life worthy of your sacrifice."

And just like that scene in *Saving Private Ryan*, let us also this day look at the cross like Ryan did. We cannot truly live lives worthy of the supreme sacrifice Christ made for us. His death is infinitely worthy. For that we can live lives that are to the praise of the glory of His grace.

Child of God, you are blessed. You are blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Are you walking in the blessing of God?

Are you living a life that celebrates His blessings?

Is your life filled with rejoicing or with regrets?

Don't miss another moment of joy by living beneath your calling.

Or perhaps you are one who says, "That's okay for someone who is a Christian already, but I'm not sure that I really am one."

Well, all I can say is that these blessings are not being withheld from you.

God gave His son for everyone who will come to Him.

Will you do that tonight?

Will you turn from the living death of sin, turning to the abundant life of Christ? The Spirit of God is calling you...