

"God's Grace in the Believer's Life"

Part 1

Ephesians 1:4-5

Introduction: Last week in our study of Ephesians we looked at a very misunderstood topic. The topic we looked at was "Election". There are many who teach that only those who are the elect can be saved and within the teaching of Calvinism they teach that Jesus Christ only died for the ELECT. But in our study last week we looked at what the Bible teaches concerning Jesus death on the cross and we looked at what the word ELECT refers to.

1. Jesus died for the sins of the world according to the Bible.

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

2. Salvation is available to all.

Romans 10:13

¹³ *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

Revelation 22:17

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.*

3. It is God's will that all be saved.

2 Peter 3:9

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.*

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

² For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

⁴ Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

4. Election has NOTHING to do with salvation.

Last week we looked at three groups which are referred to as the ELECT.

A. Israel

Isaiah 45:4

⁴ For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

B. The Church

Romans 8:32-33

³² He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

³³ Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

C. The Righteous Angels

1 Timothy 5:21

²¹ I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Because the angels are referred to as the ELECT, we know that election cannot refer to salvation. When the Bible refers to Israel, the Church and the Righteous angels as the ELECT it means that each of these groups represents and serves God. Israel represented Him in the Old Testament. The Church represents Him today. The angels are His spiritual representatives who serve Him by ministering to the church.

In all of what we looked at last week we considered how God, before the foundation of the world, chose to have a church/bride for His Son. The invitation is for whosoever will to come and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and they will then be a part of the church. This body of believers would then be God's representatives to all the world.

2 Corinthians 5:19-20

¹⁹ To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

I. The Blessings for the Body

Notice Ephesians 1:3

We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN CHRIST. That is IN THE BODY. Now watch the explanation.

A. Holy and Without Blame

Notice Ephesians 1:4

"Chosen before the foundation of the world" - This is not a reference to individuals, but it is a reference to the church/the body of Jesus Christ. Those who make the choice to accept Jesus Christ as Savior are part of this body and are then made HOLY and WITHOUT BLAME.

I want to look closely at each of these statements for a moment. Both of these statements refer to our POSITION IN CHRIST. This is the result of being baptized into the body of Christ.

- **Holy** - This has the idea of being set apart for service for God. This is a reference to our sanctification. When God saves us, He sets us apart as HOLY. This means that we are now HOLY vessels that are to be used for His service.

There is nothing more tragic than a Holy vessel that is used for an unholy service. This is our POSITION in Christ, but it should also be a description of our PRACTICE in life. There should be no unholy practice found within our lives.

God not only set us apart as HOLY in Christ, but He also equipped us to live lives that match our position. Let me borrow from our Wednesday Night study of Romans to show you what God has done for us. It starts with God giving us His Spirit.

1. He freed us from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:2

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

2. He stripped our sin nature of its power at the cross.

Romans 8:3

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

3. His Spirit fulfills the law in us when we walk in the Spirit.

Romans 8:4

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

4. He placed a new heart within us.

Romans 8:5

⁵ For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

5. He empowered us to put to death the deeds of the body.

Romans 8:11-14

¹¹ But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

¹³ For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

¹⁴ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

So, we have been set apart in position and have been empowered to live a life set apart for God.

➤ **Without blame/blameless**

This is a very interesting word. The word literally means "without blemish". Let me show you how the word is used in the Old Testament.

Numbers 6:14

¹⁴ And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings,

Now let me make the application. IN CHRIST we are completely blameless, and we will be presented blameless on the day when we stand before Him.

Colossians 1:21-22

²¹ *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled*

²² *In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:*

Again, this is our POSITION and it should also be our PRACTICE.

2 Peter 3:13-14

¹³ *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

¹⁴ *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*

Now let me pull some thoughts together here. The word has the idea of an offering that is spotless. We are to present ourselves to God as living sacrifices.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Now let me explain what this means for our everyday lives. Everything that I do should be without spot and blemish. That means that everything I do I should do as unto the Lord.

Colossians 3:23

²³ *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

My entire life should be lived as an offering to the Lord. If what you are doing is something which you cannot do as an offering to the Lord, then you should not be doing it.

Our PRACTICE should match our POSITION in Christ.

B. We are adopted

Notice Ephesians 1:4-5

God has predetermined from before the foundation of the world that all who come to Jesus Christ would be blessed by the adoption to Himself.

There is so much connected with the thought. We have been studying this on Wednesday Nights in Romans. If you have been here this will be a short review. Let me show you what Paul wrote to the church at Rome.

Romans 8:15-17

¹⁵ For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Before salvation we were living under a spirit of fear which placed us in bondage. This was the fear of God and the fear of being judged for sin. It was living under a cloud of guilt due to sin.

The entire unsaved world lives in this fear. They may deny it but deep down it exists. That is why the world keeps themselves so busy so as to not think about this. But when a man or a woman repents and accepts Jesus Christ, they are brought into the family of God into an intimate close relationship with God. So close that we can use the word "ABBA" which means "Daddy" or "Papa".

Not let me explain the adoption here. We are born into the family of God when we are saved and then the Holy Spirit places us in the family as mature sons. The word "adoption" means "son placing". Let me show you what this means by showing you more of Romans 8.

Romans 8:15-17

¹⁵ For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Paul tells us here that we are joint heirs with Christ. In the Old Testament under the Jewish economy the first born always received a double portion of the inheritance. But with the family of God it is different.

When Paul wrote Romans, he had in mind Roman adoption and inheritance. Under Roman law an adopted child was immediately given the same rights and privileges as biological children. When it came time to distribute the inheritance, they were all heirs.

This is exactly what is meant in Ephesians 1:5.

When we were saved, we were born again into the family of God and then we were placed by the Holy Spirit as the mature sons in the family. Now we are guaranteed to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.

In heaven there will not be different portions of inheritance. We will all inherit all things.

Hebrews 1:1-2

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Conclusion:

Before the foundation of the world God predetermined there would be a church and all who repent and place their faith in the finished work of Jesus will be part of the church. Those who make this choice will be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ.

- ✓ We will be presented holy and without blame.
- ✓ We will be joint heirs with Jesus Christ.