



**I am a C.H.R.I.S.T.I.A.N.**

- I. Paul's history with Ephesus
  - A. Paul visited Ephesus briefly during his second missionary journey, A.D.49–52 (Acts 18:19–21)
  - B. Paul stayed three years during his 3rd missionary journey, A.D. 52–55 (Acts 19)
  - C. Paul wrote Ephesians during his first Roman imprisonment, A.D. 61–62.
  
- II. Paul's letter to Ephesus is a letter to us.
  - A. The earliest manuscripts do not contain a specific address to the Ephesians.
  - B. In Ephesians...what would normally be the 'teaching' part is largely taken up with the praise of God...[it] was actually intended as a circular letter for the churches of the whole Roman province in Asia (including the seven mentioned in Rev. 1–3)." (Turner, 1222)
  - C. Paul's letter explains to us what it is to be a Christian.
    1. There are 12 mentions of our union with Christ in verses 3–12.
  
- III. What does Paul's letter say to us?
  - A. God has spoken well of us.

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“Verses 3-14 are God-centered, describing the blessings of salvation from the standpoint of God's pleasure, His purposes, His provisions, and His glorification and they focus on salvation as a work of the Trinity.” (Deffinbaugh, 2004)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us.” [v. 3a]

B. We have been blessed in Christ.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” [v. 3]

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.” [Rom. 8:36]

C. We are blameless in Christ.

“For [God] chose us in [Jesus] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.” [v. 4]

D. We were chosen.

“For [God] chose us in [Jesus] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.” [v. 4]

IV. You weren't chosen because of yourself, you were chosen in spite of yourself.

A. We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe.

“From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord. Even at Horeb you provoked the Lord to wrath, and the Lord was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you.” [Deut. 9:7b–8]

B. We are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.

“The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually...But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord” [Gen 6:5, 8]

“In love He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.” [v. 5–6]

Our holiness and our blamelessness and our love and our sonship are not ends in themselves. They exist for something greater: the praise of the glory of God's grace.” (Piper, 1982)

“Predestination is the heavenly Father's shout of eternal love...God shouts to them, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; before the world was made, I called you my own. You are mine.'” (Chappell, 30)

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V. You are IN Christ?

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth.” [v. 7–10]

A. To be in Christ is to receive all that Christ has received.

1. To receive Christ's BLESSINGS

“We receive Christ Himself. We are united to Him by His Spirit so that all that He achieved for us becomes ours...we died with Christ, were buried and raised with Him, ascended with Him, reign with Him and will be with Him when He comes in glory.” (Ferguson, 8)

“God says that despite knowing that sin makes you impure before Him, and that to cleanse you He would have to sacrifice His son, and to equip you He would have to provide His Spirit, nonetheless it gives Him pleasure to reveal to you the mystery of Jesus.” (Chappell, 39)

2. To receive Christ's RIGHTEOUSNESS

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross.” [Col. 2:13–14]

3. To receive Christ's SONSHIP- both Jew and Gentile

“In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory.” [v. 11–14]

VI. You are God's Eternal Plan A

““For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” [Isaiah 54:10]

“Before the creation of the universe God thought of me. He fixed his gaze on me and chose me for himself. He did not choose me because I was already in Christ of my own doing, but that I might be in Christ. He did not choose me because he saw me as a believer, but so that I might become a believer. He did not choose me because I chose him, but so that I might choose him. He did not choose me because I was holy or good

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but so that I might become holy and good. Everything I am and all I hope to be is rooted in God's freely choosing me. My faith, my hope, my work are not the ground of electing grace but only its effect. And so there is no ground for boasting except in God. And in the face of fear and loss of assurance and all my own defect, I speak this word of trust: "Who shall bring any charge against the Lord's elect!" (Piper, 1992)

VII. The glory of God in redemption is a Trinitarian work (Ferguson, 20)

A. Salvation has its origin in the plan of the Father.

And authority was given [to the Beast] over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain." [Rev. 13:7b–8]

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" [Matthew 25:34]

B. Salvation comes through the work of the Son.

"We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." [Hebrews 6:19–20]

C. Salvation is effected by the work of the Spirit.

1. If the Spirit **seals shut**, the point must be that He seals in faith and seals out unbelief and apostasy.
2. If the Spirit seals us as a **sign of authenticity**, then He is that sign and it is the Spirit's work in our life which is God's trademark. Our eternal sonship is real and authentic if we have the Spirit. He is the sign of divine reality in our lives.
3. Or if the Spirit **marks us with God's seal**, He protects us from evil forces which won't dare to enter a person bearing the mark of God's own possession. (Piper, 1984)

D. Salvation is given freely.

"In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of His glory." [v. 11–14]

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