

LIVING THE CHRISTLIFE  
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**Studies in Ephesians**  
**Ephesians 1:1-10**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup> which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

v 1 – “Paul, an apostle...”

Our spiritual gifts, our callings, are by the will of God

“To the saints being in Ephesus...”

“and faithful in Christ Jesus.”—this was probably meant jointly and inclusively—not making a distinction.

v 2 – “Grace to you...”

A word of blessing from the Father and from the Lord Jesus

v 3 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...”

in Christ – one of Paul’s most frequent phrases. We are not people who subscribe to certain truths. We are “in Christ” through the Holy Spirit. God’s blessings to His people are found “in Christ.”

“with every spiritual blessing”

meaning “of God”

unseen

obtained through salvation

eternal

more “real” than material things in this life

“in the heavenly places”

We have already been given these blessings—they “have our name on them”

In the “heavens”—the heavenly realm—more than a place

v 4 – “even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.”

We can miss the joy in these verses when we become too absorbed in challenging, metaphysical questions.

God chose you! –this is something to be thrilled about—not just to put on a note card for a debate.

He chose us “in Christ”!

God always knew that Christ’s work would be necessary.

“before the foundation of the world.”

He [Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you.

—1 Peter 1:20

“...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.”—

Revelation 13:8

Some renderings of this verse are “...and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world.”

Either way supports the view of God’s “foreknowledge.”

“...that we should be holy and blameless before him.”

God chose us unto this purpose

Whatever our “life goals” may be, this is God’s will for us  
Holy. Blameless. Walking in Christlikeness.

“In love...”

Can attach to what came before or to what follows. The Gk is unclear.

“he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ...”

One option is—we could rejoice in this without trying to extrapolate a doctrine that goes beyond what is written!

This verse, or other similar verses, never says that God made this election on a basis that has no connection with a person’s heart or choices or behavior. God does not have to explain Himself to us.

Remember: all things are known to God. He does not have to “wait and see.”

The entire Bible is filled—filled—with references to the conditions of a person’s heart and with commandments and appeals and teachings regarding a person’s choices and behavior. All these things matter.

The Bible also affirms, here and elsewhere, that those who are in Christ were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. And that “those whom [God] foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.” (Romans 8:29)

These truths are not in conflict.

Paul teaches us—for a source of rejoicing and praise to God—that God “predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”

### God and Time

We cannot see things from God’s perspective, because 1) He has all knowledge, i.e. He is not “learning as He goes,” and 2) He does not live in the dimension of time. (He created time.)

God relates to us within a context of time because we exist in it—we *do* “learn as we go”; we make choices; we know things today that we could not have known yesterday (they had not “happened yet”—for us, not for God); if we made a judgment about someone based on the future, we would be guessing—for good or for bad, accurate or inaccurate—but God does not have this limitation; all things are known to Him.

This should amaze us and fill us with joy, humility, and thanksgiving.

God has been seeking us, calling us, saving us—it is His effort on our behalf according to His own will that is the theme! Our “choices” are *not* the theme. (Our “choices” are responses to God’s grace. We could not simply “choose” to be forgiven and be saved, if it were not offered to us by God.)

“to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.”

This is the result of our election in Christ—that all should praise the glorious grace of God and his Beloved Son, who is the Savior of the world.

v 7 – “In him we have redemption through his blood...”

How many discussions of Christianity take place, and of faith and of salvation—and how many American populists sermons are preached purporting to be “Christian,” that never mention the shed blood of Christ that purchased our redemption!

The New Testament never fails to mention that we have redemption only “through His blood” and that our sins had to be forgiven!

We never “get past that.” We never should forget or fail to remind ourselves and others.

Communion is a tangible reminder. And the death of Christ on our behalf must always be proclaimed.

vv 8-10 – in all wisdom and insight, making known to us...

“in all wisdom and insight” also can attach backward or forward

God has made known to us the *mystery*—something that can only be known by revelation

This, too... “according to his purpose”

The mystery is that the only-begotten Son of God would be incarnate and become the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, and that, defeating death, is now the Risen Lord and Savior who will come again and will deliver “the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.” (1 Corinthians 15:24) The Redeemed will live forever in the new heaven and new earth that God will create—united in Christ, in whom “all things hold together,” (Colossians 1:17) in “heaven and on earth.”