

Sermon Outline
God's Glorious Grace
Ephesians 1:3-14
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Paul's "blessing of God" for his blessings given to us in Christ Jesus overflows in a torrent of praise and thanksgiving. Given the riches of grace on display this is a most reasonable and right response. An ounce of praise is a poor response to this ocean of grace. God has blessed us in Christ (permanent and unchanging reality), so let us with Paul lift up hearts, hands, and voices, and "bless the Lord!"

I. Election - Ephesians 1:3-4

- A. Election Declared (Romans 8:28, 33; 9:10-24; 11:5-8; John 6:37; 15:16; 17:2; Acts 13:48; Deuteronomy 7:6-8; Revelation 17:14). In fact, the doctrine of election is simply the doctrine of creation.

"The eternal and sovereign decree of God to lead the Church as the Body of Christ, with all its individual members, each in his own position, to eternal salvation and glory." – Herman Hoeksema

1. God chose a people and he chooses persons too.
2. God chooses for various purposes and ends
3. God chooses us, that we might choose him and become his holy inheritance

B. Election Despised

1. God must be Seen to be Fair (and anything but sovereign!)
 - But "grace" is never "fair". No, God must be *both merciful and just* for he is holy love. The problem is our inadequate doctrine of God.
2. We must be seen to be Free (and anything but subordinate!)
 - But man always acts freely in accordance with his nature, and that nature is sinful, fleeing from and hating God, that is, the God of the Bible. The problem is our inadequate doctrine of man and sin. We are "bad to the bone."

- *"While the Bible teaches that the natural man is dead and bound in his sins and therefore cannot do the things that he ought, like repenting...it also teaches that all men, whether in a state of innocence, sin, grace, or glory are always free to do what they want...Because they are free to do as they please, they are responsible for what they do."* – James Kennedy

- *"What good is a "whosoever will" in a world where no one can?"* – C. Spurgeon

C. Election Described (Aquinas)

1. Free – Not based on any merit or utility in us: *"God has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not by our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began..."* – 2 Timothy 1:9
2. Eternal - Begins in eternity past to secure eternity future (and all in between): *"God from the beginning chose you for salvation..."* 2 Thess. 2:13
3. Fruitful - Election is unto holiness – Ephesians 1:4
4. Gracious – Both undeserved and efficacious – John 15:16
5. Humbling – Look who God chooses! 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

- *"It is useless to enter into God's eternal counsel. For he shows us with his finger how he has elected us, at least if we are not ungrateful to him, but acknowledge the good he has done us and are fully persuaded and resolved...that there is no other reason for it than that he has set his seal upon us...he has reserved us for himself as his own children."* – John Calvin

II. Adoption – Ephesians 1:4-6

- A. Love adopts
- B. Beloved children in the Beloved
 - This is our “pre-destiny” – to be God’s own family, to call God “Father.”
 - The Spirit of the Adoption and Fearless Living – Romans 8:15

III. Redemption – Ephesians 1:7-8

- A. Liberty from slavery
 - 1. People became slaves three ways – birth, conquest, and debt
 - 2. Freedom through rescue and full payment
- B. Forgiveness from sins – free and comprehensive
 - “through the blood”
- C. Movement from Old to New – slaves to sons (Galatians

IV. Authentication – Ephesians 1:13-14

- *“The Holy Spirit is God’s claim on us that we are his possession.” D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*
- A. Marked for Authenticity
- B. Marked for Security
- C. Marked for Eternity

*No wonder that over and over we hear Paul’s refrain, “To the praise of the glory of his grace!”
The only greater wonder is that we don’t wonder with him at beauty so infinite and divine.*