EPHESIANS

Class Study – 1:1-14

1. 1:1 – Apostle
2. What is an apostle?
3. Why is it important that Paul be recognized as such?
4. 1:1 – What does “will of God” add?
5. 1:1 – What is a saint?
6. 1:2 – “grace and peace”
7. What do these mean?
8. Why it is important that they are in that order?
9. Where in the worship service do you often hear them used as an introduction? (mercy – full of pity)
10. 1:2 – What is the message in “God our Father” and “The Lord Jesus Christ”?
11. 1:3-14 – The section of verses 3-14 is all one sentence in Greek. It is often called a doxology because it recites what God has done and is an expression of worship to honor him. What do you think the word “blessed” means?
12. 1:3-14 – What are the spiritual blessings in verses 3-14?
13. One of those blessings, the doctrine of predestination (election – chosen esv “appointed,” “allotted.”) has been often greatly misinterpreted. It needs further un-packaging.

The Doctrine of Predestination

*The primary point is that as God’s chosen we can rest assured that our salvation will not be taken away from us.*

Predestination is whatever God has done, is doing and still will do for us during our life on earth to bring us to faith in Christ and to preserve us in this faith unto eternal salvation.

Some things to remember:

1. It is a mystery that we will never understand this side of heaven.

* Deuteronomy 29:29, “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.”
* Romans 11:33-36, “33Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 34“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?”35“Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” 36For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

1. It is not a matter of chance.

* Ephesians 1:4, “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

1. It is not motivated by any personal merit and worthiness or better conduct on the part of humans.

* 2 Timothy 1:9, “who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.”
* Romans 11:6, “And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

1. People are not predestined to hell. That would be contrary to God’s will.

* 1 Timothy 2:4, “who desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,”
* Ezekiel 18:23, “Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? Declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?” Luke 15:10 “In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

1. No one should think that, because he is in faith today and thereby assured of his election, he may now discard the Gospel, lose faith, live in sin, and still regard himself as one of the elect who will unfailingly be saved. People can through willful and intentional neglect throw away their faith. There is no such thing as “once saved, always saved” [Cain Gen 4:16 – Pharaoh – Judas/Peter – Jews – Romans 1:24]. We must make use of those means by which God assures us of His grace and thereby of our election.
2. The life of the Christian is not in the hands of “fate.” In this short phrase three things are said:
   1. Our destiny is in God’s hands,
   2. The spirit in which God handles us is loving, and
   3. Christ is the agent through whom our destiny is managed.

We have no advance or direct information of our election unto eternal life, but we may know of it by its results in our lives, by the faith, in which we now stand. As long as we remain in this faith, we should regard ourselves as the elect of God, and be certain that we are bound for heaven.

(Much of the information shared about predestination comes from: “A Summary of Christian Doctrine” by Edward W. A Koehler)

What does this mean for your life?

1. 1:4 – What do you think “holy and blameless in His sight mean?
2. 1:4 – What does “in love” mean?
3. 1:5 – Adoption was common among the Greeks and Romans. In the ancient world, when a man adopted a son, that son’s entire identity and future changed. The grateful son, lavished with blessings and an inheritance, knew in a real way the significance of a father’s choice. Being chosen meant everything. Many adopted children today know the power and reassurance of being loved by choice. What good does our adoption as God’s sons provide for us?
4. 1:6 – “One He loves” – What are instances where God expresses His love of Jesus?
5. 1:7 – What is redemption about? What is the result?
6. 1:8 – What does “lavish” suggest? Can you give some examples?
7. 1:8 – What do you think “wisdom” and “understanding” mean?
8. 1:9 – What was the “mystery” Paul was talking about?
9. 1:10 – What is the comfort in this phrase “when times will be reached”?
10. 1:10 – What do you think “under one head” means?
11. 1:11 – How is the phrase “in conformity with the purpose of His will” comforting?
12. 1:12 – How does this verse shed light on God’s purpose and will as stated in verse 11?
13. 1:13 – What further enlightenment is there in this verse on God’s purpose and will?
14. 1:13 – What do you think “marked him with a seal” means?
15. 1:14 – What is the “deposit guaranteeing our inheritance” mean for us?