

Ephesians (Part 1)

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[0 : 31] My mic.

Testing, testing. You picking me up there, David? Right. I feel like my hair is so long, I haven't had a chance to go get a haircut. I'm about to start putting it back in a ponytail.

Well, next week it's my fault. So I'm supposed to update these every month. And I totally forgot that Sunday was the first. So that's my bad. So this will be updated when you come in Sunday, and I may change it up a little bit.

And if you have any suggestions about this new layout, please let me know because we're just experimenting as we go. But I think I'm going to put the service order on the front because I think people think this is like a brochure or something.

Well, through the Grace of God, he's already forgiven me. And if you don't forgive me, that's on you. Yeah. I've got a lot of demerits here lately.

[1 : 44] All right, so let's see. We'll go and start. So we finished up lamentations. And I thought that was a pretty neat study. I know it's kind of depressing, but I hope you all learn something from it.

And that has been recorded and it's out on our YouTube channel. And whenever I get this new website going, you'll be able to search for it. And that's pretty cool, but it's all out there. And tonight we start another great book, Ephesians. Now, if you are in our Sunday morning class, which I think you all are, keep your timeline straight, because when we talked in Sunday morning, we're in Revelation, and there's a letter to Ephesians.

But that's much later than this. This is written before that. So just kind of keep that in mind. Otherwise you'll get confused. And overall, before we start this, if you haven't sat down and read the book of Ephesians, really, the letter of Ephesians, it's only six chapters.

Take some time and read through it all in one sitting. Because when we're going through this, we're going through like verse by verse. Right. But you don't read a letter like that. You need to get the big picture first and then you start going into the details.

So take time to read it and kind of get the general picture of what Paul is trying to say here, because he's going to spend three chapters just writing about the things that God has done for you, and then he's going to go into now, what do you do with that? Okay. And we're going to talk about some of the history again. But overall. Right.

[3 : 38] This is an example of what the Christian life is and then how it's displayed. That's kind of the big picture. What does a Christian mean? Remember, when this is written, these people are in the middle of a pagan culture. Right.

What does a Christian mean in that? How do I Act? Is it right to feel this weird? Who am I right? And so Paul's trying to answer some of these questions, the big picture stuff, and then he's trying to answer, this is what this looks like when you live it out.

Okay. Kind of big picture, but take some time, if you haven't already, just read through it. It's only six chapters. It's ten pages in my Bible and half of that's study notes, it's really not that long. So we're going to go through that and we're going to start tonight in chapter one, verse one.

And at the beginning we're going to take the first how many? 14 verses. That's what we're going to do. We're going to start there and then we're going to start to dive deep into what Paul is writing to the Church. Ephesus.

So Ephesians, chapter one, verse one. Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to God's Holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be Holy and blameless in his sight, in love, he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ in accordance with the pleasure and will, to the praise of his glorious Grace which he has freely given us in the one he loves. In Him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's Grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

[5 : 46] He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times reached their fulfillment, to bring unity to all things in heaven and on Earth under Christ. 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 were also included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your Salvation, when you believe you are 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. Now that's pretty to me. This is kind of thick reading, right?

And so if you compare this back to even our Mark study, Mark was very short, short sentences like very action oriented. Paul is a little more educated and it seems to show in his writing because he's using fancier language. I don't know if you've noticed, but when you read this, one of these sentence must be like five lines long right there's like commas and dashes, but there's no periods in them because Paul's really coming out hard. He's coming out of the gate and he's just going deep. So we're going to take a look at that.

Paul verse one, Paul an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. Paul knew that he was an Apostle, and he says, by the will of God. Now, this is a shorthand way of saying he miraculously intervened in my life from killing Christians and struck me blind on the road to Damascus and made me sit for a while, a few years, all that's kind of wrapped up into that sense by the will of God, Paul was changed because of the will of God. And notice he calls himself an Apostle of Christ. Now, this is something different because later on we're going to see Saints.

And those are two different terms that Paul uses. So it's not so much in this Church or even in this denomination, but when you look out at different denominations, you'll see denominations today that say they have Apostles today. And we would probably lean against that term because we would consider Apostles to be maybe like the direct disciples of Jesus, like direct, not indirect. So John would also be an Apostle. Paul, having his direct encounter with Christ, would be considered an Apostle.

Now, some people use that today as well. I've encountered Christ today. That's not really kind of what we're talking about, but you can debate terms all day long. But the point what I'm trying to make is he knew what he was. He knew he was set apart just like an Apostle, and he was spreading the gospel.

[9 : 16] And he probably knew that his writings would be considered scripture at that point. In fact, when we look at some of the other books, if we get time, some of them actually state that this is scripture. So he's setting up an authority like, this is me. These are my credentials, right. And then, of course, in any letter you have the two like who's?

The two to God's Holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus, God's Holy people who are faithful. If you look at some of the earliest writings, the NIV actually points this out, that some of the earliest writings don't have in Ephesus. So it's kind of generic in nature that maybe Ephesus was added later. I don't know. I mean, it's kind of hard to tell with history.

I kind of feel like it's tefas's. But in a matter of thinking, it doesn't really matter because we learned in our other class that all these letters would be circulated around all the churches around them. So it's not like the things that he's saying here would only apply to Ephesus, but you would write it to a particular Church and then they would pass it on. So Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, peace on Earth, goodwill to men. That is the kind of the shorthand gospel Grace and peace to you from God, not damnation and suffering that you deserve.

Now, he starts really going into it, verse three, praise be to God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Now, who's blessed us, God? What's he blessed us with Salvation, every spiritual blessing. That's the way the NIV Word did. And where has he blessed us with these in the heavenly realms?

Now, this is going to be a recurring theme through Paul because he's talking to a people in a very pagan country with really real problem. They've got very serious suffering and stuff. And what Paul is reminding them is, yes, you do have blessings. Yes, you do have Providence of God. But you're talking about spiritual stuff.

[12 : 04] And this is in comparison to the Old Testament. The Old Testament, when Israel had their Covenant, right? Remember what it said, you'll be my God, I will be your God, you'll be my people, right. Whoever blesses you, I will bless whoever curses you or curse. And he's going to give them land.

If you look at it, big picture, it's almost a very physical Covenant, like material, like you're going to get land, you're going to be blessed with food, you're going to be blessed with children, you're going to be blessed with all this. And now we switch over into this new Covenant. New Testament, the Covenant has changed, right? And Jeremiah even talks about this. There's going to be a time Jeremiah says, 1916, somewhere around there, he said there's going to be a time when this Covenant changes.

And it's not going to be like the old Covenant. It's going to be a new Covenant with the Jews and the Gentiles. And it's going to be a new type of Covenant. Jeremiah says. And this is that new type of Covenant.

We have a spiritual Covenant. All the things that you're doing right now on Earth, you're building up treasures. Now, I don't see any treasures. They're in heaven, right? That's what God's saying.

Your inheritance, all the stuff that you're building up is in heaven. So let's keep that in mind. And he's kind of riff on this a few times throughout the book. But all the things that you're building up to, you're not necessarily like people are looking for material wealth now, right? Healing.

[13 : 45] Now, that's not the promise. That's not the Covenant that we're under. You'll have peace, you'll be given wisdom to understand. You'll be saved from the wages of your sin. But these are all spiritual things, attributes.

Now, he may bless you materially, he may heal people. And we've seen that in this Church. We've seen that happen. But it's not a guarantee. It's not the promise.

So right off the bat, Paul's kind of indirectly, I think, because he's going to add a lot to this. But he's saying certain things about your faith like what you're building up is in the spiritual realm, for he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be Holy and blameless in his sight. And this is where we'll spend a good part of the discussion because we can't avoid it. The all present all encompassing topic of predestination. And it's a good thing Kenny's not here because we'd be here all night, because this is the running joke that we have that everything that we talk about will come back to predestination at some point.

So let's read ahead, because he's going to say this a couple of times, but let's read ahead and then we'll kind of cover it all together. In love. He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and goodwill, to the praise of his glorious Grace which he has freely given us, the one he loves. In Him we have redemption through the blood. I'm going to skip on down to let's see nine.

With all wisdom and understanding, he may know to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times reached their fulfillment. Eleven. In Him we were chosen, having been pre indeed, according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. Let's see, 13. And you were included in Christ when you heard the message of your truth, when you believe you were marked with Him a seal who is a deposit and guarantee of our inheritance.

[16:17] So all throughout this section we see predestined for knowledge chosen. And if you're not familiar with the concept of predestination, and this debate has been going on for hundreds of years, so don't think we're going to solve it tonight. But in a nutshell, the idea is that predestination is God chose certain people, certain creations knowing he chose them, that they would be saved, and some people he didn't choose. And God, as creator of everything, is totally within his right to do that because he is completely sovereign, he's not under control of anything. And you being the sinner that you are, deserved hell anyway.

So you don't really have really a bone to pick. And it's by His Grace anyway that anybody gets saved. So sorry if you weren't chosen. I mean, you're just getting what you deserve. Anyway.

That's kind of the predestined. And this comes from a long line of teaching all the way back. If you go back to the Protestant Reformation, started off with probably zingley, but Calvin is probably the one who really, I guess, elaborate or made this idea popular. And it's commonly called Calvinism. And there's different as you look into it, there's different types.

So this is kind of the basic nutshell. Now, me and Kenny have discussed this in length, and I can tell you that I firmly am not a Calvinist. And I will explain my reasons why in a second. Kenny is not a Calvinist, and we have explored these scriptures for a long time. The reason I am not of this.

And when you read these verses, like, if you just read them by themselves, I mean, they sure do seem to, at least on the surface, indicate that, wow, some people are chosen and some people aren't. And my argument would be twofold. First, like everything else that I say you can't take, the Bible is not a textbook. You cannot take certain verses by themselves and not match them up with everything else that the Bible says about that topic. So you can't necessarily do that because there are conflicting verses with the Calvinist view.

[18:58] For example, God doesn't want anybody to perish, right? It says that in John, he's not willing that anyone should perish for God so loved the world that he gave his son. Right. That whosoever whosoever that's anybody. So there are conflicting verses with that statement.

And then the other statement is, I think you can read this a different way.

I think you're getting the subject wrong of what these verses are trying to say. And we'll talk about that more detail. Now, like I said, this debate has been going on in the Church and even in the Baptist faith, this belief is still taught and it's around. It's more predominant in certain denominations than others. But it seems to be everywhere.

And like I said, it's been going on for centuries.

I'm tempted to say this is not a core doctrine, because at the end of the day, whoever is going to choose to be saved or not, it doesn't really affect the Salvation. Like you're going to be saved anyway or not. But I think it is very important because if you believe that certain people are saved and certain people aren't, I mean, wouldn't that really affect how you react to people or interact with people? Like, imagine what it's going to do to like, why would you use to people if they weren't chosen anyway? And if they were chosen, well, they're going to get saved whether or not you interact with them or not, right?

[20 : 44] I mean, really, there's also other issues with the view, because in Calvinism, you have to at the end of the day, it boils down to God created a universe and God created beings that were destined for hell that they had no choice over, and that would make God evil. And that would be wrong. But there are some very intelligent, very bright people that hold to this view. And if you look around, if you search around for like a Reformed it's commonly known under that name today as a Reformed view. And if you go look for Reformed churches, that's what they mean.

They believe in this, which is kind of weird to me, because if you were already chosen to be a part of their Church, then why are they advertising I don't know. There's a lot of philosophical inconsistencies with the view, but I'm not saying that I'm right. Like I said, this is a view that's been exposed by centuries, but I'm pretty well convinced that it's not right. There is also and I think overall with the Calvinist and non Calvinist view, which is sometimes called Armenianism, because the opposing view has come up with a guy called Arminia so Armenia, and he was counteracting this Calvinist view. And the idea, what they're both views are trying to explain is, well, how can God know everything and people still have a free will, right?

That's really what these viewpoints are trying to do, because how can God know that some people are going to get saved, that some people aren't going to get saved, and yet you still have a choice in the matter.

That's the kind of question that they're trying to ask. Now, for me, personally, I don't find any logical inconsistency with that. I don't see the problem how God can know that you'll be saved and you won't be saved, and yet you still had a choice in the matter. Now maybe it's because of my experience with children, because I can know certain things and they still have a choice. For example, if I put a cookie on the table and Mitchell is in the vicinity, I can tell you that he's going to eat that cookie.

I know it. But did he have a choice in the matter?

[23 : 33] So for me personally, philosophically, I don't have that kind of problem. But for some people, this is like they really struggle with this. So we need to have some Grace in understanding where these viewpoints come from and what they're trying to accomplish, because it's a whole lot easier to justify this in your mind. Well, God just chose me or God didn't choose me. Okay.

I mean, that's one way, but then you've got a whole lot of other Bible verses that you really have to swim against the grain to get the answer. Now, as we go through this, I'll share with you my thoughts, but feel free to discuss, because this is a very controversial topic and it's a very hot topic, as it always is. But it's a deep topic, and I think we can't avoid it. As soon as we hit Ephesians and you start talking predestination and all the stuff, we have to hit it at its head. So, for example, what I think in verse four and starting off for he chose us in him before the creation of the world, to be Holy and blameless in his sight.

Now this whole before the creation of the world. Right. This is shorthand for predestined, like you'll use in other sentences. But to be chosen, some people will read this and say, he chose me before the foundations of the world. And in a sense, yes, but what is he talking about?

And this is what I'm saying where you get the subject wrong? Who is he talking to? He's talking to a Church. And he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be Holy and blameless in his sight. He chose us in Him is probably the key verse here.

What was chosen before the foundation of the world? Well, he chose us. Yes. In Him it's almost. And this is the way I read it.

[25 : 40] Before the creation of the world, before all this started, God knew that people create sin, right, as we define God as knowing everything. He knew this. And so before he even started, he also had the solution. In Him, sins had to be paid for and it had to be paid for with a perfect person. And the people that had faith in Him would be saved.

So in Him is the key part, because the predestined part is Jesus Christ would have to die. And what was predestined is anyone in Him or being saved would therefore be Holy and blameless in his sight. Now, does that make sense? What was predestined here? What I think he's trying to say is not like as the souls are coming out of the conveyor belt, right?

Well, this guy is saved and these three, well, they're going to hell. No, that's not how it's working. He's saying everybody's sinning. I know this from the get go, but because I'm a loving God, I've already come up with a solution. I've already paid for their sin.

Right. But there's only one way. The payment is Jesus Christ. And either you believe in Him or you don't. So in a way, it's kind of God's being the best of both worlds.

He's done everything for you all you have to choose. You just have to choose a belief. You don't want to even have to do anything. It's just a choice. You make a thousand choices every day, right?

[27 : 33] That's the only thing. So what was predestined? The plan, the plan of Salvation was predestined, and it was predeceined that whoever believed in Christ would be saved. That's what predestined. And that makes a whole lot more sense to me at least than trying to justify, well, he chose me, but then whosoever?

And you're trying to get this to match, whereas this view matches everything, right. And also, I just think maybe it's the translation and maybe it's because people didn't pay attention in English class and they didn't learn about like, subject predicates and prepositional phrases and stuff. I don't know.

But that to me is probably the most logical reading of the text, and we'll see that coming back into some of these other ones. So what was predestined? Those who were chosen in Him before the creation of the world, those chosen or he chose us because he's already talking to the Church. He chose us and we're Holy and blameless in his sight. Now, Paul is again, he's trying to explain who are you?

Right. People reading this, we're kind of spoiled. We've had 2000 years of Christianity so far, right? You can kind of look back and you can say, well, what is a Christian? What should I Act like?

Right? Well, you and you and me, I mean, maybe we haven't had the best examples, but we've had examples. But in 60 Adhesives where they're still worshipping Caesar and sacrificing Bulls on altars. And especially remember in Ephesus you had the 7th wonder of the world, the temple to Deanna, they had some real problems. Who am I?

[29 : 33] Like, what am I supposed to do now, right? Paul's trying to help them with that. You're Holy and blameless before the Christian. You're Holy and blameless in God's site in love. He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will.

He predestined us. He chose us being the Church right to adoption.

Well, in ancient times, adoption means that you're a full member of that family with all the benefits thereof. So if you were adopted from a different country and you're adopted by a Roman, you are now a Roman citizen, free and clear, like with all the benefits and duties thereafter. So they would have understood what this adoption meant. Well, guess what? Who's adopting you?

God is adopting you to sonship through Jesus Christ. That's the predestined part. He predestined for adoption. Again, the plan through Jesus Christ. Not only did he save you and made you Holy and blameless, but the plan, the predestined part is you're also going to be full members of God's family.

You're not going to be like second rate members of God's family. You're not going to be like the cousins, right. Your full sons and daughters of God's plan. So again, we're setting up what is your place in this family and in society? Why?

[31 : 24] In accordance with his pleasure and will.

What does God do anything for? And this is something that people really well, God wanted to create us because he was lonely. No, God doesn't need anything. By definition, God doesn't need us. In fact, in whatever you want to call the time before time, the Infinity, right.

When God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, they were in perfect unity and they could have stayed that way forever. Eternity. They chose through why? Pleasure and their will. It's almost like the God had wanted to share this unity with creation.

Now we say that like we have any inkling what that would even mean. Right. Because we can't even comprehend what the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit and perfect unity even means, right? Something we can't even imagine. But they just willed it.

They didn't need to. They just did, right. They don't need any justification. But it certainly seems that God wanted to share this perfect love with other beings. Now, when you go down that route, it also makes sense that you'd want to share this love with people or beings.

[32 : 57] People would want to share that with the people that want to be there. Right? I mean, if you don't want to be there, it would almost be unloving to force people in.

Okay, that's a good question.

Maybe he messed up, right? Is that what you're saying, Bobby? Well, I mean, think about it.

That didn't mess up. But at the same time, let's think about it like this. We're almost going into philosophy a little bit. Can A. Created being as great or greater than the creator?

It seems like not right.

[34 : 05] Even if God created, I don't know, something supremely powerful, like, I don't know, a Genie or something, a sub God. Well, at the same time, it's not as great as God, because God, A, created them and B, God existed before time to be created, there has to be a time. Right? So they're already, like, not eternal. Okay.

So from a philosophical standpoint, that can't be. I mean, think about it, Bobby. He created Adam and Eve knowing what would happen, which means, like, maybe there were other options. He could have created three beings. He could start it off with a thousand beings.

He could have started off with a city. He could have started off in the desert. But for some reason, God chose Adam, then Eve, shortly thereafter in the garden. And this was the best plan, right? And this is we're learning something about God and creation, and he already knew.

And it seems like no matter what the plan was, people always send because you're right. I mean, if he could have started over and come up with a sinless but yet free choice, I think he probably would have did. Right. Because the Bible says he doesn't wish anybody to go to hell. But it seems like no matter what the creation is, that some will because they have free choice.

Now, if you want to get real philosophical, the idea is I've heard this. Why is there so much evil in the world? Right? That's a common question. The problem of evil, if you want to get real philosophical, the idea is that this is the only or this is the best possible world where it's the least amount of evil and the most people getting saved.

[36 : 09] Now, think about that for a second. Any other option would be more people would be, what do we say? Going to hell right now? What are we optimizing for? Like, think about it.

You could have technical, I mean, theoretically a less evil world, but more people go to hell. Now you're getting real, like down in the weeds philosophically when you start thinking about that, and that we're kind of off on the side tangent, but it's good because these are the same things that Paul is trying to answer. Because think about it. You're an early convert. And all in your mind, you're like, well, I thought Zeus was the most powerful.

Right. I prayed to this God and we had healthy kids. So you've got all this stuff in your mind and you're trying to put the pieces together. And Paul's really explaining this out. And the same thing today, it still stands to us today because we still have these problems of evil.

Who am I? I still sin. I think I'm getting better, but sometimes I really feel down on myself. And God or Paul is explaining your relationship, you've been forgiven and you're a full son of God. Now, later on, and we're getting ahead of ourselves, then he's going to say, because of all of this, you need to quit doing these things or basically you need to act.

Right. And we're going to come to that. It's not quite like that, but we're going to come to that. That's in chapter three. But he's going to explain, like for this chapter, in the second chapter, like all he's really piling it on.

[38 : 11] You've been given a lot.

He's really trying to get you to understand. And then because of that, not because, like you should. Right. Which you should, but not because of that, but because of your understanding and appreciation and praise for God, you won't want to act like your old self again, right? That's the idea.

And that's something I've recently come across. It's not so much like when I'm studying prideful, Clint be like, man, I'm really going to blow their minds away because I'm going to have this brand new interpretation of something that nobody's ever heard for that's pride. Right. What I'm really getting out of this is a deeper appreciation for who God is and what he's done for me. And that's kind of what we're doing together.

But especially on the teaching side, that's what I'm getting.

I'm not doing it for my pride, although it's tempting as a human being, but really I'm getting the benefit of it. It's like me going and making a garden and I till my soil, and then I share the fruit with you. We all enjoy the fruit, but every time I go and prepare this fruit for you, I'm telling my garden, and it's getting ever deeper, ever more fertile. Right. I'm getting like a lot out of it.

[39 : 45] Is that kind of a weird example, but that's kind of how it makes sense in my mind. And then I hope you take this fruit and eat it and go till your own garden, because you're going to be dealing with people that I can't deal with. Right. But hopefully through this, you can answer some of their questions. Well, dad, why is there so much evil?

These Christians, they don't seem any different than any regular people. Why did God do all this anyway? This sure seems like a lot of hassle for all this. I mean, there's a lot of problems in the world. Well, hopefully we can answer some of these questions as we go through this.

So in accordance with his pleasure and will, to the praise of his glorious Grace which he has freely given us in the one he loves. Again, it's not just us, it's all about Christ. And we come in through Christ, right. For some reason, Calvinism really puts the purpose on the individual and really take away from Christ. It's all about Christ.

Like that was the plan. Now, through that, through us coming in, he gets the praise of his glorious Grace. He's going to get all the honor and glory from that. But it's not really about us. It is, but it's not in him.

We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's Grace that he lavished on us. Well, how are we redeemed? Right? That's the question he's asking. How are we redeemed through his blood?

[41 : 35] Right. Blood had to be shed. This is going all the way back to the Old Testament. This is how sin is paid for. Punishment for sin is death.

How did they kill things? Right? They sacrificed animals. There'd be blood. Jesus all the imagery.

He was the sacrificial lamb. The payment of sin, the bloodshed life. You have to die, right? So what's the punishment? Your life covers your sin.

The blood is a symbol of life, right? So the payment for your death to make you alive is the blood. How are you alive?

How's your blood made? Resurrected, right? It's Jesus Christ's blood, right? God's blood. You literally think about it like you were dead in your trespasses and sin.

[42 : 32] You're dead man walking. Dead woman walking, just like Christ was resurrected. You're been resurrected. That's why you're a new creation. That's why you're going to get a new name.

If you're paying attention in my Sunday school class, you're going to get a new name because you're a new person, but you're still stuck in this whole body. What's the problem with that? Well, because you got a new spiritual name, right? So in him we have redemption through blood, the forgiveness of our sins. And why?

Because it's all according to what God wanted through the riches of God's Grace that he lavished on us. He wasn't stingy about this, right? It's not like, okay, well, there's a lot of you guys and I've only got so much to spread around. So you get a dollop and God lavished his Grace on you. He piled it on, man.

He wasn't stingy with it. With all the wisdom and understanding. He may know to us the mystery of his will. According to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, he may known to us the mystery of his. What's he talking about here?

The mystery of his will.

[44 : 01] He's made known to you the mystery of his will. What are we talking about? Don't be cheating. Reading your study notes. I know Bobby is looking at his little study Bible.

The mystery of his will. Could be.

Yeah, well, just like you asked, though. Why would he, why would he allow sinners in the heaven? I think that's what we're getting at. What's a mystery that anyone has saved at all.

But why would he do that? Why would God kill himself? You didn't deserve it, did you? I mean, that's kind of the mystery. Why go through all this?

Why go through all this? Okay, I'll give it to you. There is a God. Well, why would he want anything to do with me? That's the mystery.

[45 : 14] That's the pagan culture that we're talking. Because you got to think the gods of the pagan culture, they kind of like dealt with humanity, but they didn't really want to be with humanity. Every time you see pagan like Zeus, they're up in the clouds, man. They're not coming down to here. If they do come down to here, it's usually to force their way upon women or other deviant acts or just to dominate mankind down here.

Right? That's why they're throwing lightning bolts, all that fun stuff. Yeah, dominate. Why would God really want any like he's going to save me. Why?

Why does he care?

That's the mystery I think we're talking about, right? And he says he's made known to us the mystery. That's what he's talking about. Jesus explained all of this, right? I'm dying so that you can be saved to pay for your sins.

Why am I doing that? Because God loves you.

[46 : 43] Yeah. Well, we're also going to come back to that question. Paul is going to talk about. These things were hidden for a time now. They're out in the open because the veil has been lifted.

And we'll talk about some of that imagery, but it's kind of along the same lines, like, why would he save you? Why would he save Israel? It's all the same thing. What is God the creator of this whole universe? Time, space, matter?

What does he have to do with us? We're like dirty, filthy creatures down here killing each other. If I had any choice, I'd move to a different planet. Right? You people are messed up.

Yeah. I gave you food and water. Think about it. Right? Think about it like your dog.

Well, yeah, well, you're right. But let's think about the context here. We're in pagan culture and the pagan gods did you weren't any good to them. Like you were bringing them sacrifices, right? Zeus and all that.

[48 : 10] So they didn't like, blow up your house with a meteorite or something. Right? So Paul here is also setting them straight. You've got to get this pagan stuff out of your mind, right? This is the one true God above all others, right?

That's what he's saying. So he's kind of preemptively answering this with all wisdom and understanding. He may known to us the mystery of his will. That's the plan, right? According to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, the plan to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment, to bring unity to all things in heaven and on Earth under Christ, when the times reach their fulfillment.

Now, I did a study once, and I can't remember exactly when. But when you look at the Old Testament and you look at the time period from whenever you want to say the Earth was created, whether it's a billion years ago or 6000 years ago, it doesn't really matter. But if you take that time period to roughly 400 BC, which is when the Bible, the Old Testament ends, the amount of people that we're talking about as a percentage of people that have ever lived really, really small. Okay.

If we're asking why now, why at zero, was Christ born? Right. And we've talked about this. Well, A, he got the message out before the vast amount of people were ever born. Second, between 400 BC and zero, right.

Between the end of the Old Testament, the beginning of the New Testament, what comes on the scene? The Roman Empire. Right. And what do the Romans do? They unite the vast majority of the known world.

[50 : 07] Now, there are other people out there, but the vast majority live around that Mediterranean Sea. Right. The Egyptians have been there for eons, it seems. Right. And people kind of moved around because, hey, people got to have water and they went over to Rome and Italy and guess what they did?

They developed a common language throughout that whole area, and they developed a transportation network across the whole area. And they provided security for Roman citizens across the whole area. What does that allow? The free flowing thoughts and ideas?

If you were God and you were trying to allow people to still have free will, but at the same time, try to get as many people to come to know you as possible, seems like a good plan. That seems like it'd be the right time. Well, now we have a global transportation network, a global language, and we have enough people to where those people that are not in that main area can travel out, missionaries. Right. And Bada Bing, Bada boom.

Here we are 20 years later ponder that. Now, these are all hypothetical theoretical. Right. I'm not claiming to know the will of God, but what I'm saying is it is a possibility. So the mystery and when the times research fulfillment, which I think he means now you're knowing right now, Christ is known to us.

Christ came and he died. And everybody can see it. The mystery of how like the Old Testament, they knew a Messiah was coming. They knew this, but they didn't quite know what it was going to look like. They thought it was going to look like a King, like David.

[52 : 03] Right. Successful. They got Jesus, the Messiah. So they didn't really know how that was going to work out, but they knew it was coming. And people ask, well, how are people in the Old Testament saying, same way that people in New Testaments say through faith.

Now when you look at Abraham, he had faith in God, right? He didn't really know how. Right. It doesn't say anything about Christ, but he says he believed God. When God told him all these things, he believed God.

Well, now we know. Well, Christ paid for our sins. You got to believe that. Which is the same thing. I mean, you believe in God.

God said Jesus or God. And Jesus said that, I'm dying for your sins. I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes in the Father through me.

If you've seen me, you've seen my Father. Right? It's the same thing. Same thing. But now we know how, right?

[53 : 04] That's why it's the fulfillment. And why is he doing all this now? To bring unity to all things in heaven and on Earth under Christ. It's all about Christ. It's all about bringing unity.

But notice all things in heaven and on Earth.

A little extra tidbit there. We're going to talk about the spiritual realm a lot here, too. It's not just about us.

All right, man, I'm looking at my time. Holy smokes. All right, moving on. Verse eleven. In him we were also chosen being predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.

Comma. In order that we comma, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, comma might be for the praise of his glory. Okay. Like run on sentences are a thing with Paul, right? There's a lot going on.

[54 : 09] So in him we were also chosen being predestined according to the plan of him. Right. So God's plan, which we've already talked about, and who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. This is God who works it out. God.

He works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. So everything that he Wills to do, that's what he works out in order that we might be for the praise of his glory. Now, I skipped a little comma section there because it says in order that we who were the first to put our hope in Christ. And that's what kind of makes this book confusing is Paul adds so much detail, so much rich detail, but it almost messes with the flow. You really got to break it out.

So might be for the praise of his glory. That's like a phrase. That's a descriptive phrase. But what's the subject?

Sorry. In order that we being the subject and you skip over that descriptive section might be for the praise of his glory. That's what we're doing, right. All that making disciples. And we're essentially glorifying God because whenever we go out and we tell people about Christ, we're saying God is good.

He's done this for me. He's done it for everybody. If you just come to know him, that's glorifying God. Right. That's the whole purpose.

[55 : 47] Now, this descriptive might be for who were the first to put our hope in Christ. Right. He's talking about we the Church, they're the early Church, and specifically he was one of the Apostles. They were the first. And then it goes out from there on.

So you're just adding a little description there. Right.

And you were also included in Christ when you heard the message of the truth, the gospel of your Salvation, the good news of your Salvation when you believed you were marked in him with a seal. Now, this is going back to some of their imagery that they would have been familiar with. Roman governments would seal all kinds of stuff, letters, official documents, anything official had a seal on it. Typically it could have been a wax ring. And typically they as a what do you call it?

A ring. And then they would put like a drip of wax on the envelope and they'd put their ring in it. And that's how they would know it's official. Right. Because it made some unique symbol.

Well, guess what? You got that seal. Your official, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession. So what is the seal? It's not a wax thing.

[57 : 34] It's the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is your seal. What is that? That's just a deposit.

That is only a deposit. Everything all the good things that have happened to you so far, that's just a deposit guaranteeing your inheritance. Well, that must mean that the inheritance is more right. Until the redemption of those who are God's possession, until the redemption again. It's not right now.

Not right now. Little children. That comes later when you turn of age. We do this all the time today. Trust funds, right?

You got an inheritance, but you got to wait. 221, right? You got an inheritance, too. Unfortunately, you got to die. But to die is to gain.

And you're going to get a new body and it's going to be new heaven, new Earth. So it's going to be worth it. But it's a little bit scary on this side of it, but that's the hope. All right.

[58 : 42] Sleeping. We can use different I mean, we can use different words for it until the resumption to the praise of his glory.

It all glorifies God, right? He wanted you there. So, I mean, we could just stop there like God wanted you. He wants everybody. That's why I made a plan.

You not individually, but you as the Church, you're going to be there, right. That was part of his plan. Jesus Christ is going to pay for everybody. And whoever accepts that payment is going to get forgiveness of sins. Not only that, you're going to be fully adopted into the family of God.

And guess what? Even on top of that, on this Earth, you're going to get a deposit, the Holy Spirit, which gives us the power to go through things and the wisdom. What does the Holy Spirit do for us? Lots of things. But that's just a deposit for your inheritance.

I mean, this is exciting stuff, especially to somebody who's been around pagan culture. God wants to do all this for me. That God over there just wants to kill me. I'm just appeasing him. All right, Paul, he's going to take a lot of time to straighten people out, because there's a lot to straighten out.

[60 : 08] But there's a lot to straighten out today. That's why it speaks to us today. Who are you? Are you the running little kid from the parents who are running drugs out of their house? Are you the snobby daughter who doesn't appreciate things or didn't appreciate things before?

They were saying, like, no, you're new. And these are the things that happen to you. These are the things that are going to happen to you. And the Holy Spirit is there now. So a whole different he's really answering, who are you or your son or daughter of the living God?

And that's exciting. And that gives like, people are always looking for second chances. God is all about second chances. That's why he did all this. He wants you there.

He wants you to freely choose to be with him. Right. I think that's what it's about.

Well, I think I'm going to stop there because that seems like a nice stopping point. And we'll begin in verse 15 next week. But yeah, please take some time to read the whole thing, just to kind of get the big picture, because if I were to write you a letter, are you going to immediately read it and start diagramming sentences and stuff? No, just read the whole thing, kind of get the general jest, and then it will make more sense as we dive down into the and it's very short. It's a very condensed letter.

[61 : 44] And if you wanted to have, like the what was that old series of books, Cliff Notes. Cliff Notes if you Want to Cliff Notes to Christianity and How You Should Live version. It's very condensed, but very good. There's a lot here, and I would expect probably more discussion in this book than I would lamentations because it's just too depressing. But this book, I mean, we're really trying to answer the big questions of life.

And so any question that you may have or your kids may have or your grandkids may have or your neighbor may have, I mean, this may be a great time to bring them up. And I'm not claiming to have all the answers, but I would love to explore. All right. Any other thoughts? All right.

Well, let's close in prayer. Father, I thank you for this opportunity for us to come together and study your word. This wonderful letter that Paul wrote to the Ephesians and through your wisdom and understanding to us today to preserve it through the centuries I pray that you'll let these words speak to our hearts as we go out into this world to be an example for you and a witness for you an ambassador for you into world that desperately need you these things ask for in Jesus name Amen thank you all I'm.