

Adopted by God

Աստուծոյ Որդեգիրները

Ephesians 1:3-14

Our theme:

In, By, and With His Grace.

Անոր Շնորհքին Մէջ, Անոր Շնորհքով

IN His Grace—We can be confident. We are a MASTERPIECE. That is how God sees us.

BY His Grace—We have been SAVED. We can't earn it.

WITH His Grace—We strive to LIVE, LOVE, and LEARN to be MORE LIKE JESUS.

-To be IN Christ. To Be IN His Grace. **39 times in Christ... 39 times...**

-The two phrases “in Christ” and “in Him” occur six times in the first fourteen verses.

Central topic of Ephesians. **Union with Christ Jesus.**

Let us read the passage. (In Greek, verses 3-14 are one sentence)

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

¹¹ 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, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ 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, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Eph 1:3-14 ESV)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...

Blessed be the God... Who has blessed us...

Although Paul was under house arrest in Rome when he wrote these words, he considered himself blessed.

John Stott says:

“Christians are trinitarians. We believe in one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We affirm with gratitude and joy that God has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing. That is, every blessing of the Holy Spirit has been given us by the Father if we are in the Son.”¹

My teacher Ken Boa summarizes this passage like this:²

Paul starts with Doxology, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.

The Father 1:4-6

Chose us

Adopted us

Accepted us

The Son 1:7-12

Redeemed us

Forgave us

Revealed God’s will to us

Gave us an inheritance

The Holy Spirit 1:13-14

Sealed us

Gave a guarantee/Down payment

1.The Father 1:4-6

a-The Father Chose us

Let me start with asking question, who is the audience?

Paul writes **“to the saints (God’s holy people) who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus.”**

-His audience are both Jews and Gentiles who accepted Christ.

-The Jewish audience knows that God chose them (Scripture in the OT).

-With the new adoption, Paul explains **that God chose the church**, the believers, the faithful saints (you and me). In other words, the new church is the new Israel, God’s chosen people.

-So here comes the doctrine of predestination. He chose us even before our birth. He chose us **before the foundation of the world. There is master plan.**

-I am also a believer of human responsibility, freedom to choose or not to choose. It is a mystery for me to put those two doctrines next to each other.

Let me emphasize that God does not choose based on our merit. No, nothing like that... He chose the sinner, like me, like you...

-Therefore, the concept of God choosing us, is not a privilege, it is relationship a with God and each other, which means responsibility. (Justified... Sanctified)

That means you are not accidentally born.

“You are not an accident, you are a divine choice” (Henri Nouwen).

b-The Father Adopted us.

Do you know how difficult it is to adopt a baby?

I have friends in life who were adopted as child and raised in them loving families.

Adoption gives the person a new family, a new name, and a new identity.

Adoption gives us: A New Beginning, origin (Past); New Dignity (Present); and New Destiny (Future).³

-A New Beginning, origin (Past)

-Past: God took the old Adam and gave a new spiritual DNA through the new Adam (Christ) ... With the former Adam we were destined for eternal separation from God. With the New Adam, the second Adam, in CHRIST we have new beginning... (past)

-New Dignity (Present)

-Present: God gives us a new dignity. In the Roman era, when someone was adopted, the adoptee took the adopter's name and rank and acquired rights of succession in his new family. (new name and a new status, a new dignity.)

-New Destiny (Future)

-Thus, we have a **new Future**, a new destiny... **In him we have obtained an inheritance...** This inheritance is eternal and joyful existence with God. Believers are promised "**an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you**" (1 Peter 1:4).

Wow, what a Father who adopted us! Some of us don't have a positive image of our earthly fathers. I focus on how God the Father is taking care of me.

I am not an accident. I am the adopted child of God for HIS GLORY..**(Show some slides of creation of God....)**

How did God give us this inheritance?

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.¹¹ 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,¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

2-The Son 1:7-12

-Redeemed us (by the blood of Jesus)

-Forgave us (forgave our sins)

Here comes again the concept of GRACE: **according to the riches of HIS GRACE, lavished upon us....** his lavish love...

What kind of love is this?

The lavish love God has for us. A love that God predestined His Son to die for our sins...

what kind of love is this? amazing grace... amazing grace

-Revealed God's will to us (what God's will for each of us beside being adopted?)

-Gave us an inheritance. (Our hope is in Christ)

You see what God is doing. He is transforming our identity; we are created in His Image, *Emago Dei*. Sin destroyed it; our broken identity needs transformation.

3-The Holy Spirit 1:13-14

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,¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

a-Sealed us

b-Gave a guarantee/down payment

a-we are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit

When you pass the border of a foreign country, the officer in charge looks to your face, and information he has in your passport then he looks to the computer; after he is convinced who you are, then he seals it; this is it. I have granted visa and that visa is valid and not be broken.

The cowboys seal the name of the owner on the cattle.

Seal is mark of ownership, authenticity. The cattle owner is Hary's Ranch. My passport has authentic visa.

All these images external. God's seal is the Holy Spirit which was promised to us by Jesus. **God's seal is internal.** He seals our heart. We belong to God now, and it is authentic. 200%

b-Gave a guarantee/down payment.

who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it.

Greek arrabōn from Hebrew ar-aw-bone Arabic Raaboon.

NASB translates: **who is a first installment of our inheritance**

guarantee, first pledge, first installment. "In giving Holy Spirit to us, God is not just promising us our final inheritance but actually giving some foretaste of it, which, however, 'is only a small fraction of the future endowment'".⁴

God is amazing, the triune God is amazing

God adopted us, saved us, redeemed us, sealed us, paid the first installment..

Why? Why God made us his people?

Three times this phrase comes appears: **to the praise of his glory.**

Practically it means, worship God by words and deeds...

Whatever you do, it is for His Glory

Application

1. Your adoption gives you a new spiritual DNA

This should give you confidence who you are:

Let me give you some important facts about Christian identity:⁵

I HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 1.3)

I AM CHOSEN, HOLY, AND BLAMELESS BEFORE GOD.

.. just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. that we would be holy and blameless before Him. (Eph. 1:4)

I AM REDEEMED AND FORGIVEN BY THE GRACE OF CHRIST.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses. according to the riches of His grace. (Eph 1:7)

I HAVE BEEN PREDESTINED BY GOD TO OBTAIN AN INHERITANCE.

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will. (Eph. 1:10b-11)

I AM SEATED IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES WITH CHRIST.

..and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:6)

I AM GOD'S WORKMANSHIP CREATED TO PRODUCE GOOD WORKS.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)

I HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR TO GOD BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Eph. 2:13)

I HAVE BOLDNESS AND CONFIDENT ACCESS TO GOD THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST.

..in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. (Eph. 3:12)

2. The concept of being IN Jesus

Isn't this amazing, the incarnate WORD (LOGOS) indwells in you. We in Christ and Christ in us.

By the way, this is a mystery to me.

RC Sproul explains: "We are touching on one of the great mysteries of the New Testament: the mystical union of the believer with Christ. Christ comes into our lives, he indwells in us; he is in us and we are in him; God sees us in Christ; God sees the church as part of his body."⁶

We are not an accident. God adopted us, and it is planned.

This is my message to you

In, By, and With His Grace

1. John R.W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today, The Message of Ephesians*, P 36

2. Ken Boa, *Bible studies series on Ephesians*.<https://kenboa.org/biblical/ephesians-1-the-blessing-of-the-father/>

3. *ibid* Ken Boa

4. John R.W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today, The Message of Ephesians*, P 30

5. Ken Boa, *Bible studies series on Ephesians*.<https://kenboa.org/biblical/ephesians-1-the-blessing-of-the-father/>

6. R.C. Sproul, *Book of Ephesians: Gift from the Father*. <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/book-of-ephesians/gifts-from-the-father>