

THE FATHER'S WELL-SPEAKING TOWARDS US IN CHOSING US TO BE HOLY BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD TO BE HIS SONS

(Scripture quotations and footnotes are from the *Recovery Version of the Bible*.)

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:1-6

I. Introduction

- A. Paul was made an apostle of Christ, not by man, but through the will of God, according to God's economy. Paul's being an apostle of Christ refers to his position, and his being an apostle through the will of God refers to his authority.

Ephesians 1:1

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

- B. Between Paul and the saints in Ephesus, there was the communication of grace and peace. Grace is God as our enjoyment (John 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:10). When God becomes our portion for us to enjoy, that is grace. Peace is a condition that results from grace, that issues from the enjoyment of God our Father.

Ephesians 1:2

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. The Father's Selection and Predestination, Speaking Forth God's Eternal Purpose

- A. The words "blessed" and "blessing" have the same root in Greek. The Greek word for blessed means well spoken of, praised with adoration; and the Greek word for blessing means good speech, good utterance, fine speaking, fine speech, implying bounty and benefit. Used with respect to God, this blessing is a laudation, a genuine praise, even a praise to God on the highest level.

Ephesians 1:3

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

- B. God's choosing is His first blessing bestowed upon us; it is the first item of God's well-speaking concerning the church. God's choosing is His selection. From among numberless people, He has selected us. God chose us that we should be holy. The way God makes us holy is to impart Himself, the Holy One, into us so that our whole being may be permeated and saturated with His holy nature.

Ephesians 1:4

4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

- C. Being predestinated unto sonship is the second item of God's blessing. In eternity past, God predestinated us unto sonship, marking out a destiny for His chosen ones before the foundation of the world. The goal of God's predestination is sonship. God has chosen us to be holy so that we might be His sons. The praise of the glory of God's grace is the result, the issue, of the sonship.

Ephesians 1:5-6

5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **6** To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the ⁴Beloved;

Footnote 6⁴ The Beloved is God's beloved Son, in whom He delights (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). Hence, in gracing us God makes us an object in whom He delights. This is altogether a pleasure to God. In Christ we have been blessed by God with every blessing. In the Beloved we were graced, made the object of God's favor and pleasure. As such an object we enjoy God, and God enjoys us in His grace in His Beloved, who is His delight. In His Beloved we too become His delight.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the word "blessing" in verse 3?
2. What is your impression of being selected from among numberless people to be made holy and without blemish before Him?
3. Being made holy is the procedure to having what ultimate outcome?
4. Share an experience where you realized you were being "sonized" through the process of being made holy.