**God’s Eternal Purpose**

*Ephesians 1*

**Introduction**

1. Paul’s epistle to the church in Ephesus serves as a dissertation on God’s eternal purpose – **namely, the redemption of mankind**.
2. **Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to this grand theme.** The second and third chapter elaborate on that process of redemption more specifically in the Ephesians. The latter three chapters emphasize the conduct demanded of those redeemed in Christ who constitute the church.
3. In **Ephesians 1**, Paul explains God’s eternal purpose by listing the spiritual blessings enjoyed by believers in Christ. He then prays for the growth of the Ephesians in knowledge of these topics.
4. **Let us consider God’s eternal purpose as explained by Paul in Ephesians 1.**
5. Spiritual Blessings in Christ

In the blessings listed, each member of the Godhead is involved:

1. Involving the Father
	1. **NOTE: The spiritual blessings are ONLY found in Christ (v. 3).**
		1. **Cf. John 14:6** – way, truth, and life.
		2. ***“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)***.
	2. Chosen **(v. 4)**
		1. ***“in Him”*** – i.e. Christ – the choosing is a matter of **location, not individuality.**
		2. **Before Creation** – **cf. Romans 3:23** – God new before, and planned before 🡪
		3. ***“holy and without blame”*** – He knew man would sin, **and devised a plan as the panacea for sin.**
		4. *We can be holy and without blame because that is God’s desire, and such He chose FOR ALL WHO ARE IN CHRIST.*
		5. ***“in love” – “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?” (Psalm 8:4)*** – The object of God’s love – **HE GREATLY CARES.**
	3. Predestined **(v. 5)**
		1. ***“predestined”*** – a matter of determining boundaries beforehand. (*Again, not individual predestination.*)
		2. ***“adoption as sons”*** – where before, in sin, **we did not belong to God, and had no inheritance.**
		3. It was His ***“good pleasure”*** that those who so desired could be in Christ, **and have all the benefits in the family of God as a son.**
		4. ***“Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end” (Hebrews 3:6)***.
	4. Accepted **(v. 6)**
		1. In choosing us, and predestining us, HE HAS ACCEPTED us IN CHRIST – THE BELOVED.
		2. **Before** – ***“your iniquities have separated you from your God” (Isaiah 59:2)*** – *He could not accept us, but wants to!*
		3. **Now – we are accepted because of His gracious plan in Christ Jesus 🡪**
2. Involving the Son
	1. Redemption/Forgiveness **(v. 7)**
		1. **Redeemed –** from slavery to sin – ***“O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:24-25)***
		2. **Purchase price** – ***“His blood”*** – ***“precious blood” (1 Peter 1:19)*** – ***“without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22)*** 🡪
		3. **Forgiveness** – ***“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12)***.
	2. Revealed Mystery Concerning Christ **(v. 8-10)**
		1. God revealed the mystery when the time was right – ***“fullness of the times”***
		2. **Mystery is** **– the common denominator of Christ** – His authority would be all encompassing, and all can be in Him, and receive salvation.
		3. Paul explains elsewhere***, “that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:18).***
			1. He is the Great redeemer.
			2. He is deserving of our utmost adoration, and reverence.
			3. ***“by Him [God] [reconciled] all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross” (Colossians 1:20)****.*
	3. Given an Inheritance **(vv. 11-12)**
		1. As the household of God, sons of God, we are the recipients of an inheritance.
		2. ***“incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away” (1 Peter 1:4).***
		3. **We who are deserving of nothing, have been given EVERYTHING by God’s grace in Christ.**
3. Involving the Holy Spirit
	1. Sealed **(v. 13)**
		1. **Having heard the word of truth in the gospel, the Ephesians trusted in Christ.**
		2. By doing so they were ***“sealed”*** with the HS – **marked as belonging to God.**
		3. **HS of promise** – HS reveals the promises of God in the gospel, and obeying the teaching, one is sealed.
		4. ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).***
			1. **Water** – baptism.
			2. **Spirit –** HS revelation – obey the gospel.
			3. **Entrance into kingdom** – promise.
		5. ***“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His’” (2 Timothy 2:19). (GOD WILL NOT FORGET ANYBODY – HE KNOWS)***
	2. Given Guarantee **(v. 14)**
		1. The HS of promise – serves as a ***“guarantee”*** of our salvation.
		2. **Guarantee** – down-payment – promises given are assurance that the rest is coming – ***“until the redemption of the purchased possession.”***
		3. **The promises of God are certain – HS reveals such – HS is the down payment.**
4. ***“To the praise of His glory”*** – God is deserving of our praise and devotion – this is all to His glory.
	1. **Father** – Designed the plan – to be praised.
	2. **Son** – Carried out the plan – to be praised.
	3. **Holy Spirit** – revealed the plan – to be praised.
5. Paul’s Prayer
6. Prayer for Spiritual Enlightenment **(vv. 15-18a)**
	1. **(vv. 15-16)** – Paul cares for the Ephesian’s spiritual health, and prays for them.
	2. **(v. 17)** – That they are given spirit of ***“wisdom”*** and ***“revelation.”***
		1. **Spirit** – disposition – guides, influences, and governs the individual.
		2. **Wisdom** – Understanding of how to apply the things of God.
		3. **Revelation** – full understanding/comprehension of God’s revealed will – on a deep level.
	3. **(v. 18a)** – to be enlightened – SUCH IS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION.
7. ***“That you may know:”***
	1. Of the Hope **(v. 18b)**
		1. **Hope of heaven – crown of life – inheritance.**
		2. ***“living hope” (1 Peter 1:3)*** – activates us toward a life of godliness.
		3. ***“I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).***
	2. Of the Riches of God **(v. 18c)**
		1. This verse describes what we are to Him.
		2. Our redemption, and adoption as sons is ***“to the praise of the glory of His grace.”***
		3. **WE ARE VALUED BY GOD** – such should give us self-worth, and encourage us in our walk of faith.
		4. **NOTE: God would not have paid the price of Christ’s blood for our redemption if He did not value us!**
	3. Of the Power **(v. 19-23)**
		1. **Cf. Romans 1:16** – Gospel is God’s power to salvation to believers.
		2. Such gives us strength, and confidence in living for Christ obtain salvation.
		3. **HOW POWERFUL?** – Same source as the power which raised Christ from the dead, and seated Him at God’s right hand giving Him ALL AUTHORITY **(vv. 19b-23)**.
		4. **Redemption requires such power, and God offers that power in the gospel.**
		5. **The resurrection to life – to the inheritance – is certain because such power was already displayed in Christ’s resurrection.**

**Conclusion**

1. We should be impressed with the eternal purpose of God.
2. He put all this effort into saving us ***“to the praise of His glory.”***
3. The spiritual blessings in Christ are invaluable.
4. **We must grow in the knowledge of such to fully comprehend God’s love for us, and the power available toward us for salvation. (cf. 3:14-19)**