

God's Good Pleasure In His Chosen Ones

Ephesians 1:3-6

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INTRODUCTION:

Truth and beauty do go together. And so, it is not enough to show the truth of a doctrine. We must display its glory as well. There is much beauty and glory surrounding the doctrine of our election in Christ. Marveling not only in its truth, but also in its beauty is our duty. "Oh worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." (1 Chron 16:43)

TEXT:

"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, just as he chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved." Eph 1:3-6

ETERNAL BOOKENDS

Our Election (verse 4) - We were set apart for blessing before we were even created. God always had every intention of creating for Himself a people who would passionately and wholeheartedly worship Him, and if you are in Christ, He always knew your name as one of His sheep since before time began. This blessing is sure and does not depend on you, your works, your temperament, your attitude, your looks, your accomplishments, your failures, anything at all. The decree was made by the counsel of His will before we were.

Didn't I Choose First? – Romans 9:11. It cannot be, based upon the argument in this chapter, that God predestined some based upon what He saw them doing or choosing in the future.

The Beauty in This Doctrine – John 6:30-40, especially verse 37. Let the words of Jesus speak to this matter. People do not come to Christ because it seems like a good idea to them. That is because it never seems like a good idea to sinners. But the second part of this verse is the promise of the warm welcome by Christ. Every sinner who comes to God in Christ, with all of his sin, finds that God has already come to Him in Christ, with all of His promises, and with life.

Our Adoption (verse 5) - Our election and our adoption both have to do with our salvation, but they are not the same things. Our election stands as a fixed decree by God having been made before time began – before the foundation of the world. Our adoption, on the other hand, is not completely manifest or realized until we go to be with the Father.

Bodily Redemption – Romans 8:18-23. We have been redeemed, and yet only a deposit of that redemption has been left with us – that is the person of the Holy Spirit in us guaranteeing our inheritance.

As An Orphan - We are the objects, the passive recipients of an activity which was determined in the past and will be completed in the future. We say "Abba Father" not to become adopted. We say "Abba Father" by the Holy Spirit in us, who is the pledge, the proof, that we have been and will be one day be fully redeemed.

THE PURPOSE AND MOTIVATION

The Purpose – "What's He doing here?"

God's purpose for choosing His elect is clearly stated in verse 4: "that we should be holy and without blame before Him". God has nothing less in mind in His goal than our perfection – both in holiness before Him and in fellowship with Him in love.

"before Him" - It is not that God is just looking the other way, pretending that we really didn't sin. If that were the case, then in reality we would still be unclean, and our consciences ultimately would sear with guilt and condemnation.

The Motivation – "Why's He doing this?"

There are two reasons stated here as to why God established these decrees. The first is that it was His good pleasure (verse 5). The second reason is that it brings praise to the glory of His grace (verse 6). These two could be summarized simply: He wants to. He is not forced, bribed, or cornered in any way. It is easy to see here why the number of the elect is vast and innumerable. It brings God great pleasure, and it greatly proclaims His glorious grace.

ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.

"made us accepted" - It means much more than just having been given a passing grade or stamped 'approved'. The verb is used only one other time in the New Testament. The angel uses it in Luke 1:28 to describe God's favor upon Mary. Spurgeon argues that it means "divine delight". Zeph 3:17 teaches that God sings over us, rejoicing in His salvation work. This is His great love for us "in the Beloved".