

Ephesians 1 - The Work of the Trinity in Our Salvation

We had an earlier study in Ephesians 1:1-5, so this is to continue as a study of Ephesians.

The book of Ephesians, like Romans, is a treasure trove of doctrinal and theological truth. In chapter 1 alone, it deals with election and predestination, holiness, sovereignty, redemption and adoption, wisdom and grace, the revelation of his will, our acceptance by God, the enlightenment of our understanding, the resurrection and exaltation of Christ in mighty power, and the seal of the Holy Spirit as the earnest of our inheritance.

It also describes our belief of the truth in trust and faith, and love of the saints.

What is apparent just by a reading of chapter 1 is how all three “persons” of the Godhead are involved in our salvation, from before the foundation of the world, to eternal glory.

At this point, let us read the whole chapter.

So, God the Father, being all-wise and all-powerful, chose (“elected”) us as a people for his own possession, before the foundation of the world, motivated by nothing but his own love and sovereign will. His purpose is that he would have a people who would be holy, and that we would be “to the praise of the glory of his grace”. To this end, he predestinated all things that come to pass, so that we would in fact come to believe and receive, not just forgiveness of sins, but the adoption of sonship.

This necessitated the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God, by whose blood we were redeemed. Ultimately God will be glorified in the Son as the Head in heaven over his “body”, all his saints on earth together with those that have gone before, both Jew and Gentile.

As a mark of our sonship, and as the earnest (“down-payment”) of our inheritance, we are “sealed” by the Holy Spirit after we believe to the saving of our souls. He then so works in us as to gradually make us more and more conformed to the image of Christ, so that we will be “holy and without blame before him”.

Having been elected and predestinated by the Father, redeemed by the Son, made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit, and having been given faith and repentance, our place is simply to believe the truth of the gospel, and trust in him. We “receive him” (Jn. 1:12), and are made sons of God, who accepts us, and seals us with the earnest of the Holy Spirit. Our purpose in life and eternity is to be “to the praise of the glory of his grace” (1:6, 12, 14)

This brings us to one of several prayers in Paul’s epistles, where he says he ceases not to pray for them, making mention of them in his prayers:

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,
may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation
In the knowledge of him:
the eyes of your understanding being enlightened:
that ye may know what is the hope of his calling,
and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,
and what is the exceeding greatness of his power
to us-ward who believe,
according to the working of his mighty power,
which he wrought in Christ,
when he raised him from the dead,
and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places

We would do well to personalize this, and pray it for ourselves as well as others.