

A Grand Finale of Praise *God Inspires Praise to His Glory!*

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EPHESIANS 1:3-14

This is the 8th and final message on this grand opening section of Ephesians. If you think it has been overkill (and perhaps you're right) may I remind you that the late Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones preached 23 messages on this section – albeit, all filet-mignon's for the soul!

So why have 8 messages, preached by 3 men, over a 2 month period been devoted to this 1 sentence of 212 words in the original Greek text? Well, for just that reason: what would you expect from us trying to unfold such a jam-packed section of Holy Scripture. Some things just take time to explain. Here is no exception!

It is not easy to unpack 1 sentence of 212 words. You try it! It's not easy, after all, there are a lot of “theological” words and phrases here in this grand hymn of praise, aren't there? Concepts like:

“In Christ – every spiritual blessing – heavenly places – chose us – before the foundation of the world – predestined – adoption – to the praise of His glorious grace – redemption – forgiveness of sins – through His blood – He lavished upon us – making known to us – mystery of His will – His plan & purpose for the fullness of time – to unite all things, things in heaven & things on earth – inheritance – according to the counsel of His will – hope in Christ – heard the word of truth – gospel of your salvation – believed in Him – sealed with the promised Holy Spirit – guarantee of our inheritance – until we acquire possession of it – to the praise of His glory...”

...there you have it, just a sampling of the density of this passage: 26 words & concepts. Many of which we just don't get and are hard to digest!

So we have needed to simply slow down and see what this beautiful opening anthem of praise to God is saying to us...about God, who He is and to what degree he has blessed us in Christ! And on top of that, of all the things Paul could begin his letter with, he goes with this extended anthem of praise! Here, he is not in a rush right out of the gate to tell them what they should be doing for God, or how they should be living, or what “ministry” they should be involved in. No, he basks in the glory of the noon-day Sun, not in the candlewick of his own works for God! **Yet, as He is partaking in this good work of praising God (for isn't praising God a good work?) his focus is on what God has done for Him in Jesus! NOTE THIS!**

How about you? Have you been impacted by what you see here? Are you basking in what God has done for you, as He is set on magnifying Himself in His grace to you through Christ? Is your praise a blessing of God triumphant, as it is here? Or have you found yourself “antsy”, wanting to get on with the practical Christian stuff? Oh, we'll get there...but there is a Christian path to true good works...the path of grace and the way of blessing from God **first** in the gospel of

Jesus. His lavish love and guaranteed gifts will move you in ways you cannot be moved otherwise!

We need to hear about Christ's death and resurrection. We need to hear how we are justified by faith apart from works of the law. We need to hear the old, old story once more. Because the secret of the gospel is that we actually do more when we hear less about all we need to do for God and hear more about all that God has already done for us in Jesus! – Kevin DeYoung

So we have needed to take our time to drink deeply of how this letter opens.
We need this in plain simple, clear, direct terms!
Reminds me of the diagnosis of my car, which has been on the fritz a bit lately:

SEE DIAGNOSIS

Let's go, with basic truth in plain language.
This morning, let's look at this "Grand Finale" of God inspiring Paul to praise Him for the magnitude of His blessing...this inheritance that is guaranteed by God to those who have come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!
The "blessings" listed in 3-10 are the details of this inheritance, which we have been given in Christ! Verses 11-14 are the GRAND FINALE of Praise to God!

Ephesians 1:11-14 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.

In this passage we note: One part is amplified by the other!

The Extent of the Inheritance: For the Jew first...and also for the Greek!
"We, first" – "you also"

The Certainty of the Inheritance: Predestined according to the counsel of His will!
"We have obtained" – "Sealed, guarantee"

The Way to the Inheritance: By Grace alone, through Faith alone.

“Hope in Christ” – “heard the word of truth, the gospel” & “believed in Him”

The Nature of the Inheritance: God, Himself is our Inheritance!

“In Him” – “sealed with the Promised Holy Spirit”

“God is the portion of His people, and in Him, who is ‘the possessor of heaven and earth,’ they are heirs of all things. . . God is all-sufficient, and this is an all-sufficient inheritance. God is eternal and unchangeable, and therefore it is an eternal inheritance — an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that does not fade away. . .

It is God Himself, then, who is the inheritance of His children. . . He communicates Himself to them by His grace, His light, His holiness, His life.”

~Robert Haldane, Commentary on Romans

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

(Romans 8:15-18)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

(1 Peter 1:3-7)

In this anthem, do you see God inspiring Paul to praise him for His lavish grace to us in Christ?

Do you notice God...praising God?

Are you capture by the God-centeredness of God?

After all:

God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him! ~John Piper