

Women's Fellowship  
and Bible Study

*Ephesians*

**God's Master Plan – Part One**  
**Election in Eternity Past**

Last week if you remember, we introduced this book - - and one commentator called it the GRAND CANYON OF SCRIPTURE ...

And we imagined we were standing on the brink of the Grand Canyon ... like this:  
Really - - the beginning of a 4 part look at God's Master Plan ...

This week - -

**God's Master Plan – Part One**  
**Election in Eternity Past**

Listen, being a Christian is a super thing. God designed it before the world began. And once Paul gets this doxology rolling in verse 3 he can't stop and he rolls right on and never puts a period in the Greek sentence until the end of verse 14, 202 words in a row without a period. He just rolls just like a snowball going downhill and it just picks up more glistening glory as it goes. As he thinks about this master-plan in eternity.

For the next four weeks – we'll look at ***Ephesians 1*** divided into four sections:

- Verses 3-6: ***Election*** in Eternity Past
- Verses 7-10: ***Redemption*** in History Past
- Verses 11-14: ***Inheritance*** in the Future to Come
- Verses 15-23: ***Power*** in the Here and Now

## Election

- **National Election**
  - Israel

**Deuteronomy 7:6–7**

**6** “For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

**7** It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for **you were the fewest of all peoples,**

- Salvation not assured

**Romans 9:6**

6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,

- **Vocational Election**

- Office or purpose

**Levites**

**Deuteronomy 18:5**

5 For the Lord your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for all time.

**The Twelve**

**Luke 6:13–16**

13 And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles:

14 Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew,

15 and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot,

16 and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

- Salvation not assured

**Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas**

**1 Samuel 2:28–29**

28 Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel.

29 Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?’

**Judas**

**John 6:70**

70 Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.”

- **Angelic Election**

- Fallen angels - demons
- Elect angels

**1 Timothy 5:21**

21 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.

- Salvation not in view

- Holy angels did not sin
  - Fallen angels cannot be redeemed
- **Saving Election**
    - Old Testament and New Testament believers
    - Salvation assured
    - Salvation secured

This is the election that Paul has before us in Ephesians. Let's look at it in the text:

**Ephesians 1:1–6**

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

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

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

**4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

**5** he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

**6** to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Now I would ask you to constrain your thinking - - we aren't taking an interest in the controversy surrounding the biblical principle of God's Election - - and how does that square with Man's Responsibility - - we want to just stand here - - on the brink of this great Grand Canyon Letter to the church ... and see if we can understand what Paul is saying - - simply saying.

**Ephesians 1:1–6**

**Introduction**

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

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

**Doxology**

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

**4** even as *he chose* (**How – Sovereign Election**) **US** (**Who**) in him before the foundation of the world (**When**), that we should be *holy and blameless* (**What**) before him. In *love* (**Why**)

**5** *he predestined* us for *adoption as sons* through Jesus Christ, according to *the purpose of his will*,

**6 to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he *has blessed us* in the Beloved.

- **How** - - God's Sovereign Election
  - "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v.3)
  - "he chose" (v.4)
  - "he predestined" (v.5)
- **Who**
  - "us" (v.3 & v.4 & v.5 & v.6)
- **When**
  - "before the foundation of the world" (v.4)
- **What**
  - "holy and blameless" (v.4)
  - "adoption as sons" (v.5)
  - The blessing...
    - "has blessed us" (v.3 & v.6)
- **Why**
  - "love" (v.4)
  - "the purpose of his will" (v.5)
    - (v.9 & v.11)

**Ephesians 1:9**

**9** making known to us **the mystery of his will, according to his purpose**, which he set forth in Christ

**Ephesians 1:11**

**11** 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,**

- "the praise of his glorious grace" (v.6)

## The Tension

- Imagined
  - There is the false idea that some Christians believe in God's sovereignty in salvation and others don't.
    - Not true.
    - All Christians believe that God saves.
      - They believe it in their experience.
      - They believe it in their prayer.
      - They believe it in their evangelism.
      - They believe it in their hope.

"What is true is that all Christians believe in divine sovereignty but some are not aware they do. And mistakenly imagine and insist that they reject it. What causes this odd state of affair?"

"The root cause is the same as in most cases of error in the church, the intrusion of rationalistic speculation, the passion for systematic consistency, a reluctance to recognize the existence of mystery and let God be wiser than men and a consequent subjecting of Scripture to the supposed demands of human logic."

We've seen already this morning - - how clearly the Bible declares God's sovereignty in His choosing us -  
- saving us.

## **But this book will put us at the center as well ...**

### **Ephesians 1:15–16**

**15** For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,

**16** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

### **Ephesians 4:1–3**

**1** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

**2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

**3** eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

### **Ephesians 4:17**

**17** Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.

### **Ephesians 5:1–2**

**1** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

**2** And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

## **But here is where we begin – and it is simple ... and simply profound!**

### **Ephesians 1:3–6**

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

**4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

**5** he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

**6** to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.