

July 9, 2014

Holy and Blameless Before Him (The Necessity Of Salvation)

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NASB), ***“Blessed be the God and Father of the 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 would be holy and blameless before Him...”***

The city of Ephesus and especially the church at Ephesus was near and dear to the heart of the apostle Paul. Paul had led the church in Ephesus for three years and in fact had spent more time in Ephesus than anywhere else in his ministry.

The city of Ephesus was located at the mouth of the Cayster River, on the east side of the Aegean Sea. It was best known for its temple to Artemis or Diana. The temple was awe-inspiring and was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient world. Ephesus was also an important political, educational, and commercial city and was along a major trade route to the east. After Paul left Ephesus he left his young friend Timothy as the pastor of this fledgling congregation. Ephesus is one of the churches that Jesus specifically addresses in the letters of Revelation.

One of the key themes, if not the key theme in this epistle is the importance of the church. Paul emphasizes in this epistle the fact that the church is a living breathing organism. The church is not just a building or a geographical location it is a living breathing organism. As Christ followers we are then part of the church, the body of Christ. Each of us is different and come from different backgrounds and have different abilities but we are all saved by the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. The doctrine of salvation by grace and by faith alone in Christ alone is very central to the message of Ephesians. It is my hope over these next few weeks that this message will be of great encouragement to all us.

The first thing that Paul does after giving his wonderful greeting that was very similar to most of the greetings he gave, was he establishes in verses 3-4 some of the basics of our salvation in Christ. Paul writes in verse 3, ***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...”*** The word ***“Blessed”*** is translated to mean “well spoken of.” God is to be well spoken of because He is God and because He has chosen to bless us with the immeasurable blessing of salvation.

In the next phrase of verse 3 Paul writes, “who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” The phrase ***“spiritual blessing”*** is translated to mean “benefaction.” The word benefaction is translated to mean “the act of benefiting, a benefit conferred...” God has blessed us with every spiritual benefit we could ever need.

Verse 3 continues and says ***“in the heavenly places...”*** This refers to the realm of God’s complete, heavenly domain, from which all of His blessings come from and flow from. In Ephesians 1:20 says, ***“Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places...”*** In Ephesians 2:6 it also says, ***“and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in***

the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” This concept of ***“the heavenly places”*** is prominently mentioned in this letter to the church at Ephesus.

The second and primary issue that Paul deals with involving our salvation is found here in verse 4 and that is that fact that God has chosen us for salvation. Verse 4 says, ***“just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.”***

The word ***“chose”*** that is used here in verse 4 is translated to mean, “to select, or pick out.” As hard as this is for some to accept it is the truth of Scripture. We do not save ourselves God does the saving through the person and work of His one and only Son Jesus Christ. He has *picked* us for salvation, *chosen* us, yes even *predestined* us for salvation. Ephesians 2:10 says, ***“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”***

God has chosen us and He did this it says ***“before the foundation of the world.”*** Why? So that we would be ***“holy and blameless;”*** this speaks to the reality of God’s holiness and our sinfulness. We cannot have any sort or relationship with God if we are left in our unrighteous condition. This is why God has chosen us and why He sent His Son Jesus who was fully God and fully man to die on the cross for our sins so that we would be ***“holy and blameless before Him.”***

Tomorrow we will continue our look at the first chapter of Ephesians and will continue to look at the doctrine of predestination and how that fits in with God’s great love for us. If you have any questions about what you have read today please contact me at pastotra@centurylink.com or on Facebook or on Twitter at @Adamspastor. You also may contact me here at Calvary Baptist Church at 970-824-5222.