

Our Salvation: The Work of Father, Son and Spirit

September 3, 2023 ▪ Brad Manley

The work of the Father in our salvation.

The work of the Son in our salvation.

The work of the Spirit in our salvation.

Ephesians 1:1-14

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 to himself 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. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

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, 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. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What do you know about the book of Ephesians?

Read: Ephesians 1:1-14

1. In Ephesians 1, Paul points to the many ways God has blessed us in Christ. As you read through 1:1-14, list the key words that identify these blessings. Which of these blessings stand out as especially encouraging to you? Why?
2. What are some significant implications of believers being chosen “before the foundation of the world” (v. 4)? Note how God’s choosing is part of our identity as Christians (Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9). How should this truth affect our tendency toward pride (1 Cor. 1:26-31)?
3. Verse 4 tells us one reason God chose us is that “we should be holy and blameless before him.” Is this how you think of your standing before God? Why or why not? How does this truth create both freedom for us and expectation of us?
4. Another aspect of God’s blessing in Christ is His intention to adopt us into His family (v. 5). What are some implications of being adopted into God’s family? What would be missing from our relationship with God if He saved us, but did not adopt us?
5. Three times these blessings of God in Christ are said to be according to God’s purpose (vv. 5, 9, 11). What does this tell us about God? What significant difference should this make in our lives?
6. Paul tells us that God has bestowed all these blessings “to the praise of his glorious grace” and “to the praise of his glory” (vv. 6, 12, 14). What does this mean? Is God being self-centered in pursuing this purpose? Why or why not?
7. At conversion, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit (v. 13). What kind of sealing is being pictured here? This sealing is a guarantee of our inheritance (v. 14). How would you describe our inheritance? Knowing this awaits us, how should this affect our lives?
8. From this passage, describe how God gets glory and we get joy from the blessings of adoption, redemption and forgiveness which He gives us in Christ.

Pray: Thank God for His good purpose for us in Christ. Express your gratitude for all that brings you joy from the truths in this passage. Pray we would be people who embrace and delight in God’s blessings “to the praise of his glory.”