

Our Call, A Study of Ephesians¹

Ephesians 1:1-12

February 12, 2023

Over the next few months:

Our Call as Christians
Our Call as a Church
Our Call as Spouses
Our Call as Parents

She had gone down in history as “America’s Greatest Miser,” yet when she died in 1916, “Hetty” Green left an estate valued at over \$100 million. She ate cold oatmeal because it cost to heat it. Her son had to suffer a leg amputation, because she delayed so long in looking for a free clinic that his case became incurable. She was wealthy, yet she chose to live like a pauper. Eccentric? Certainly! Crazy? Perhaps—but nobody could prove it. She was so foolish that she hastened her own death by bringing on an attack of apoplexy (stroke symptoms that occur suddenly) while arguing about the value of drinking skimmed milk! But Hetty Green is an illustration of too many Christian believers today. They have limitless wealth at their disposal, and yet they live like paupers. It was to this kind of Christian that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians.²

The fact that Paul is writing about wealth would be significant to his readers, because Ephesus was considered the bank of Asia. One of the seven wonders of the world, the great temple of Diana, was in Ephesus, and was not only a center for idolatrous worship, but also a depository for wealth. Some of the greatest art treasures of the ancient world were housed in this magnificent building. In this letter, Paul will compare the church of Jesus Christ to a temple and will explain the great wealth that Christ has in His church. Paul has already used the word riches; but you may want to check other “financial” words such as *inheritance* (Eph. 1:11, 14, 18; 5:5) and *fullness*, or *filled* (Eph. 1:10, 23; 3:19; 4:10, 13; 5:18). Paul is saying to us, “BE RICH!”³

Author: Paul. He ministered in Ephesus in 53ad. but didn’t stay there (Acts 18:19-21). 2 years later he stayed in Ephesus for at least 2 years and saw that they were evangelized (Acts 19). During that time he founded a church in the city that was dedicated to the worship of goddess Diana. 10 years later, while in jail in Rome, he wrote Ephesus, around 62ad.

Audience: Saints at Ephesus, “one who has been set apart.”

Source: God the Father

Scope: “spiritual blessings” (blessings of the Spirit.)

Sphere: Human and divine

“Blessed us with every spiritual blessing.” (Undeserving)

Theme: Christian Riches in Christ

He has Chosen us. (v.4)

“Try to explain election and you may lose your mind. But try to explain it away and you may lose your soul.” ~ **Unknown**

As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one.”

Romans 3:10-12

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Luke 19:10

“The mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility will never be solved in this life. Both are taught in the Bible (John 6:37). Both are true and both are essential.

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious

¹ Portion of outline taken from Warren Wiersbe “BE Series.”

² Ibid

³ Ibid.

display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.⁴

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. **2 Peter 3:9**

In all this we need to remember our calling, to go and make disciples. We need to debate less and make disciples more.

He has adopted us. (v. 5)

Predestined -Refers primarily to what God does for saved people. (Acts 4, Ephesians 1, Romans 8)

Nowhere in the Bible are we taught that people are predestined to hell, because this word refers only to God's people. The word simply implies 'to ordain beforehand, to predetermine.' Election seems to refer to people while predestination refers to purposes.⁵

Adoption – both present and future.

We, as Believers, have been given:

- A new name
- A new home
- A new Father

He has accepted us. (v. 6)

We can't make ourselves acceptable to God; but He, by His grace, makes us accepted in Christ.⁶

God loves me just the way that I am, but He loves me too much to leave me that way.

He has redeemed us (7a)

To *redeem* means "to purchase and set free by paying a price." There were 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire, and often they were bought and sold like pieces of furniture. But a man could purchase a slave and set him free, and this is what Jesus did for us. The price was His own blood (1 Peter 1:18ff). This means that we are free from the Law (Gal. 5:1), free from slavery to sin (Rom. 6), as well as free from the power of Satan and the world (Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:13–14). If we were slaves, we would be poor, but because we are sons, we are rich!⁷

He has forgiven us. (v. 7b)

Means to "carry away."

Day of Atonement – scapegoat and the blood for our sins.

He has revealed God's Will to us (vs. 8-10)

Now and in the future!

He has made us an inheritance (v. 11-12)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **1 Peter 1:3-5**

Prayer Focus:

- **Thank the Lord for His gifts, especially that of salvation!**
- **Have you received the Gift and experienced His riches?**
- **Am I sharing that Gift with others?**

⁴ Baptist Faith and Message

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.