

# Accepted and Adopted: The Blessing of Election

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having **predestinated us unto the adoption of children** by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein **he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**

Ephesians 1:3-6

## **Introduction:**

1. This chapter, and Rom 8-9, exalts God's sovereignty in salvation over others in the New Testament.
  - a. Here is where election is defined as God's choice of men and predestination is mentioned twice.
  - b. Here is where the will of God in salvation is mentioned four times but the will of man is ignored.
  - c. Here is where the heresy of accepting Jesus is grandly replaced with God accepting us in Jesus.
  - d. Here is where praise of God's glory is stated three times but praise of or for men is fully ignored.
  - e. Here is where emphasis is clearly on the pleasure (2) and purpose (1) of God, not desire of man.
  - f. Here is where the emphasis is on God's glory (5) and grace (3), not the value or worth of man.
  - g. Here is where Jesus Christ is exalted far above the highest heaven and why? For you and me.
  - h. Here is where we learn the crucial power necessary for a sinner to believe – resurrection power.
  - i. Here is where we learn our God and Father works all things after the counsel of His own will.
  - j. Here is where God's own purpose in and for Himself is more important than any purpose of men.
2. This chapter presents the truth of the gospel kept secret since the beginning of the world and from most Christians even today (1:8-9; 3:1-13; I Cor 2:6-16).

## **The Hopeless Problem**

- A. God has, does, and will reject all men for sinful rebellion they persist in perpetually; there is no hope of change in God or man to ever bring about His acceptance of them.
- B. By inheritance and nature, God hates you as a condemned rebel enemy of Himself.
  1. By birth, you are related to Adam and condemned for his one sin (Rom 5:12-19).
  2. By birth, you inherited his sinful nature that loves sin and hates God (Eph 2:1-3).
  3. By nature, you continue in sin every day offending God daily (Rom 3:9-18,23).
- C. Your depraved heart and mind are too proud and rebellious to believe His revelation.
  1. The natural creation is sufficient, but men invent any imaginable excuse against it.
  2. Though consciences condemn them, men flagrantly sin against internal morality.
  3. No matter how well the gospel is preached, it moves no man (I Co 2:14; Rom 8:7).
- D. The evidence of God's dealings with men as recorded in the Bible is rejection of men.
  1. God sent a worldwide flood and drowned every man, woman, and child but eight.
  2. God annihilated seven nations of Canaan so His chosen people could possess it.
  3. Greek philosophers honored the unknown God, but it would not spare them at all.
- E. All the evidence we can gather from our own experience confirms this dire situation.
  1. Death clutches against us every day of our lives and takes down every living soul.
  2. Creation without cooperation shouts loudly that there is a God with eternal power.

3. Great differences among men in intellect, bodies, and circumstances are grim.
  4. Natural disasters, from diseases to tsunamis, take human life without any regard.
  5. Babies are ripped apart in wombs or die horrible deaths of starvation after birth.
- F. The testimony of scripture is absolute and thorough against God accepting any sinner.
1. God said to Cain, *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if not well, sin ... (Ge 4:7).*
  2. *Keep thee far from a false matter ... for I will not justify the wicked (Exodus 23:7).*
  3. *Beware of him ... provoke him not; he will not pardon your transgressions (Ex 23:21).*
  4. *The LORD, the LORD God ... and that will by no means clear the guilty (Exodus 34:7).*
  5. *Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins (Josh 24:19).*
  6. *If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity (Job 10:14).*
  7. *God accepteth not the persons of princes ... they all are the work of his hands (Jb 34:19).*
  8. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity (Psalm 5:5).*
  9. *God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalm 7:11).*
  10. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God (Psalm 9:17).*
  11. *The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked ... his soul hateth (Psalm 11:5).*
  12. *I hate, I despise your feast days ... I will not accept them (Amos 5:21-24; Hos 8:12-14).*
  13. *The LORD is ... great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked (Nahum 1:3).*
  14. *God will render to every man according to his deeds (Rom 2:6).*
  15. *Every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God (Ro 3:19).*
  16. *The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23).*
  17. *God accepteth no man's person (Gal 2:6; Luke 20:21).*
  18. *For our God is a consuming fire (Heb 12:29).*
  19. *Whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast in the lake of fire (Re 20:15).*
  20. *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth (Rev 21:27).*
- G. You have arrived in life, very conscious of existence, and you cannot turn it off.
1. If you think consciousness is from inanimate matter, then you are a rebel idiot.
  2. There is an infinite consciousness you will face and give account of your life.
  3. Or choose ... random acts of pain and violence ... or deal with a holy God.
  4. You will certainly come to an end of life ... and He cannot accept you at all.
  5. He has already rejected you, and He will formally declare it Judgment Day.
  6. Expected return of infinite pain, if only a 5% chance, is infinitely horrific.
- H. You are doomed, and there is nothing you can or will even try to do about it.
1. Though you may be convicted now, it will end in five minutes with a distraction.
  2. You are in serious trouble, and the consequences are beyond your imagination.
  3. No governor will accept you, how much less will God (Malachi 1:8,10,13)?

### **The Heavenly Provision**

***3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:***

- A. When considering salvation, your first thoughts and words must be blessing to God.
1. When David blessed God, he listed many things ... and forgiveness (Ps 103:1-5).
  2. We have blessings, but the greatest blessing is clearly heavenly favor and riches.
  3. It is ignorance, neglect, or rebellion that defrauds God of great glory for saving us.

4. Our prayers must include and should emphasize God's blessings of salvation.
- B. Our God is identified different ways, but one way is by relation to Jesus Christ.
  1. God is not a name: It is a noun, and a title, and an office. Who is our God?
  2. Our God has a specific name – He is the LORD Jehovah – I AM THAT I AM.
  3. It is a shame when men confuse Jehovah with Allah or other idols of imagination.
  4. Confusion leaves when our God is identified as God and Father of Jesus Christ.
  5. For more about God's name ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/god/a-name-above-every-name.php>.
- C. The source of salvation and spiritual blessings is Almighty God, LORD Jehovah.
  1. You cannot help yourself, and no other man or woman can help you (Jn 1:13).
  2. Man by nature is totally depraved and at war against any cooperation with God.
  3. He must bless you, for there is no other way to obtain acceptance or adoption.
  4. He blesses us; we do not bless ourselves; Freewillism applied is blasphemy.
  5. He is the Potter of humanity for salvation or condemnation (Rom 9:19-24).
  6. He chooses to give mercy and compassion or to harden men (Rom 9:15-18).
  7. We are blessed, because the blessed God blessed us with all spiritual blessings.
  8. Unconditional salvation ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/unconditional-salvation/sermon.php>.
- D. There would be no spiritual blessings for sinners, if it were not for His Son's sacrifice.
  1. Note the five references to Jesus Christ in three verses (1-3). He is that important.
  2. The blessings are in Jesus Christ; you must be in Him in God's sight for blessings.
  3. If God gave His Son for you, then He will give all other things as well (Rom 8:32).
  4. There is no other Saviour! All spiritual blessings are in Christ! There are none in Mary, Mohamed, Pope Francis I, Joseph Smith, Abraham, Vishnu, or Buddha.
- E. The reference to *heavenly places*, as shown in context, is our legal standing in Christ and the eternal inheritance of glorified bodies there with Him that awaits all saints.
  1. This phrase is unique to Ephesians, and it intends heaven (Eph 1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10).
  2. These legal blessings include election, adoption, justification, reconciliation, etc.
  3. The eternal inheritance includes heaven and its intended riches for glorified saints.
- F. There is no other place for spiritual blessings. They are all in heaven. There are none in Rome, Mecca, Salt Lake City, Tibet, Jerusalem, or any other such earthly place.

***4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:***

- A. The *in Christ* relationship on which all spiritual blessings depend is our election in Jesus, as can be clearly seen by the connection of this verse to the preceding verse.
  1. All spiritual blessings of the previous verse are in Christ. How do we get into Him?
  2. The Roman Catholic Church says we must be baptized into it for us to be in Him.
  3. Alexander Campbell's so-called Church of Christ says the same thing (Gal 3:27).
  4. But the true gospel of Jesus Christ states right here it is based on election in Christ.
  5. Salvation is by God's purpose and grace in Jesus Christ before the world began, when He promised eternal life to His elect (II Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2; Rev 17:8).
  6. God chose Paul, Ephesian saints, and us in Jesus Christ – this is election defined.
  7. Jesus knew God's gift or assignment of men to Him (Jn 6:38-39; 10:26-29; 17:2).

8. This is the blessing of election, for without it no man could or would be in Christ.
  9. All men are guilty in Adam, but the elect are righteous in Christ (Ro 5:12-19); this choice by God to legally or representatively see us in the second Adam is election.
  10. It is also called federal headship or imputation – God considering men in another.
  11. The *in Christ* relationship must be divided and defined by five phases of salvation.
  12. For five phases ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/five-phases-of-salvation/sermon.php>.
  13. For much more about the two Adams ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/two-adams.pdf>.
- B. The great determining factor in salvation and spiritual riches of Christ is God's choice.
1. **According as:** Consistently as, exactly or just as, in a manner corresponding to the way in which ...”
  2. If you choose God or not has earthly benefits or consequences, but not eternal life.
  3. It is the sovereign will of Almighty God that determines salvation (Rom 9:10-24).
  4. He did not choose by foreknowledge those accepting Jesus, for (a) this contradicts Ps 14:1-3 and Rom 3:9-18; (b) it would make your choice supreme; (c) it would glory to men; (d) it would render God's and Christ's work worthless for most, etc.
- C. God's eternal choice was to place and view the elect in Christ legally and covenantly.
1. He chose sinners before the foundation of the world – before His act of creation.
  2. Here are cross-references for this ancient decree in the mind of God (Matt 25:34; Acts 15:18; Eph 3:11; II Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2; I Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8; 17:8).
  3. In this eternal sense, they were already seen as adopted, justified, reconciled, etc.
  4. This is the basis for blessing God – He chose us to all spiritual blessings long ago.
  5. Though Jesus Christ (the Godman) and you did not yet exist, both did by covenant.
  6. Though both He and you were unknown, your name was written down (Rev 17:8).
  7. Others have taught varying views of eternal justification by this eternal choice – John Gill (1697-1771), John Brine (1703-1765), William Ames (1576-1633), William Twisse (1578-1646), William Perkins (1558-1602), Tobias Crisp (1600-1643), Johannes Maccovius (1588-1644), Joseph Hussey (d. 1726), John Skeep (1675-1721), Mrs. Ann Dutton (1692-1765), John Kent (1766-1843), Isaac Chauncy (1632-1712), Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680), Robert Traill (1642-1716), Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), Lewis Wayman, William Dell, John Eaton, John Saltmarsh, Bentley, Cocceius, Witsius, Hoornbeck, Don Fortner, etc., etc.
  8. For our eternal union with Christ ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/gods-everlasting-love.pdf>.
  9. For grace before the world began ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/before-the-world-began.pdf>.
- D. Chosen in Christ, God views His elect as holy, without blame, and objects of His love.
1. By foreknowledge and in fact, we were rebellious sinners and children of wrath even as the reprobates (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Rom 9:21; Eph 2:1-3; Titus 3:3).
  2. By grace and election, He sees us sanctified and spotless children He fully loves.
  3. This is not election so that we should by our will and works live practical lives of holiness and love to God (though such conversion and practical sanctification is true), but God rather chose us in order to view us Himself as holy objects of love.
  4. God blessed us passively with blessings and made us passively accepted in Christ.
  5. The issue here is our legal position and standing in Christ – clothed in His holiness.
  6. God cannot love sin or sinners, so He chose us in Christ so He could love us (1:6).

7. Romans 5:8 exalts God's love for us by Christ dying for sinners: but He did not love us as sinners: He loved us as chosen in Christ, Who died for us as sinners.

**5 *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,***

- A. Predestination is God's choice to appoint, ordain, or fix a person or event beforehand.
  1. It is simply determining the destiny, not just destination, of a person beforehand.
  2. It is in the Bible four times, though unknown by most (Rom 8:29-30; Eph 1:5,11).
  3. In the places *predestination* is used, it is related to children and/or their inheritance.
  4. In other places, words like *ordained* or *appointed* are used (Acts 13:48; I The 5:9).
  5. What is it? God exercised determining power over passive, yea rebellious, persons.
- B. In this place here, God chose before creation to ordain certain sinners as His children.
  1. God adopting sinners is the incredible drama played on the stage of the universe.
  2. All players – angels and devils, wicked and righteous men – exist for His pleasure.
  3. Consider upward from forgiveness to justification to reconciliation to adoption.
  4. It is not your choice to determine if you are a child of God or not; it is His choice.
  5. God chose to have sinners for children, so He predestinated sinners to adoption.
  6. It is not your choice to become His child any more than children choose parents.
- C. God predestinated us *to Himself* – as His sons; the legal purchase was *by Jesus Christ*.
- D. Adoption is by predestination, which is based on the good pleasure of God's own will.
  1. **According to:** 'In a manner agreeing with, consistent with, or answering to; agreeably to.
  2. It was God's pleasure to elect and predestinate some men for all spiritual blessings.
  3. It was God's pleasure to reject and leave other sinners for their just deserts in hell.
  4. The basis of God's compassion or mercy in life is His will alone (Rom 9:15-16).
  5. This doctrine is quite clear when describing becoming God's child (Jn 1:13; 3:8).
  6. For much more about adoption as sons ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/sons-of-god.pdf>.
- E. We are *predestinarian* Baptists, because we believe these verses unlike most Baptists.

**6 *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.***

- A. Election and predestination to justify and adopt some is to *praise His glorious grace*.
  1. God did not elect and predestinate to save due to feeling bad for condemned rebels.
  2. God elected and predestinated because it maximizes praise for His glorious grace.
  3. Grace is demerited favor! You deserve eternal hell! He chose you His eternal son.
  4. Salvation is part of the divine drama of His glorious grace (Pr 16:4; Rom 9:22-24).
  5. If you ever tire of singing about the grace of God, you do not know His grace yet.
  6. If you want to fulfill your purpose in life, choose ways you will praise His grace.
  7. If you do not like to praise His grace now, what will you do in heaven (Eph 2:7)?
  8. No one in heaven will be looking up soul winners to congratulate them as Saviour.
  9. God will not share His glory with others, especially for eternal life (I Cor 1:29-31).
  10. All attention and affection in heaven will be for God and His grace in Jesus Christ.

- B. God made you *accepted* in His sight by choosing you in Christ Jesus in eternity past.
1. By your nature, character, and conduct, God must and would reject you forever.
  2. No person, pleading, or price could ever obtain His acceptance in any way at all.
  3. God chose by His will to legally account and consider you in Jesus Christ His Son.
  4. Apart from His choice there is no basis, plan, or provision for you to be accepted.
  5. The beloved here is Jesus Christ, the beloved Son of God (Matt 3:17; 12:18; 17:5).
  6. God has accepted, does accept, and will accept all sinful rebels He chose in Christ.
  7. Jesus Christ is His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased – you are in that Son.
  8. God can no sooner reject one of His elect than He can reject His own Son. Glory!
  9. The criterion is nothing you can offer – it is your name in the Lamb’s book of life.
  10. It is not whether you have accepted God, but whether God has or will accept you.
  11. It is not whether you have accepted Jesus, but if God made you accepted in Jesus.
  12. It is not whether you have chosen God, but whether God has chosen you in Jesus.
  13. You always and only chose against God and for sin but for His grace (Ps 14:1-3).
  14. This verse reveals the utter folly, heresy, vanity of the modern invitational system.
  15. It is the grace of God *wherein* we are chosen in Jesus Christ and made accepted.
  16. Outside of Jesus Christ, where you were chosen before the foundation of the world, you are totally, always, and only despicable, depraved, profane, unfit for heaven.
  17. Peter knew quickly that Cornelius showed proof of this acceptance (Act 10:34-35).

### **The Happy Position**

- A. From eternity, before the foundation of the world, God saw the elect in Jesus Christ.
- B. Pagan Gentiles who were once far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ (Ep 2:13).
- C. As sons predestinated and accepted, God sends His Spirit into their hearts (Gal 4:6).
- D. The Spirit declares God’s love within and is proof of heaven (Rom 5:5; Eph 1:13-14).
- E. Our response provoked by the Spirit is to cry Abba, Father (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:14-17).
- F. We may go boldly into the presence of Jehovah God and be heard (Heb 4:16; 10:19).
- G. Our feeble worship is also acceptable by His glorious grace (Heb 12:28; I Peter 2:5).
- H. God accepted Job, and He will practically accept His repentant children (Job 42:8-9).
- I. Those once unacceptable are now acceptable (Isaiah 56:7; 60:7; Jeremiah 6:20; 14:10,12; Ezekiel 20:40-41; Romans 14:18; Eph 5:8-10; Phil 4:18; Eccl 9:7).

### **The Holy Proof**

- A. Of greatest concern should be the evidence and proof of a person’s election by God.
  1. It begins with believing the gospel, which only the elect will do (Acts 13:48).
  2. It then continues with fear of God and works of righteousness (Acts 10:34-35).
  3. Paul clearly answered such a crucial concern (I Thess 1:2-4; I Tim 6:12,17-19).
  4. Peter filled in further details for all diligence (I Pet 1:2 compared to II Pet 1:5-11).
- B. The gospel is worthy of all acceptance – you accept its sovereign news (I Tim 1:15).
  1. The accepted time and day of salvation is the gospel era (II Cor 6:2; Isaiah 49:8).

2. Preaching and conversion offers to God an acceptable offering (Romans 15:16).
- C. The gospel brings the news of how to live acceptably to God (Rom 12:1-2; I Tim 2:3).
- D. You then should labor to be accepted practically by God just like Paul did (II Cor 5:9).

**Conclusion:**

1. Election is a blessing ... the foundational blessing of all ... to be chosen in God's Son Jesus Christ.
2. Jesus fully understood and taught this same gospel truth (John 6:38-39; 10:26-29; 17:2; Matt 25:34).
3. The true gospel is the most glorious news ever heard ... *from doomed to accepted and adopted!*

**For Further Study:**

1. The sermon outline, "What If Election Is True?" ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/what-if-election-is-true.pdf>.
2. The sermon outline, "Is Election Fair?" ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/is-election-fair.pdf>.
3. The sermon outline, "Unconditional Salvation," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/unconditional-salvation/sermon.php>.
4. The sermon outline, "Five Phases of Salvation," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/five-phases-of-salvation/sermon.php>.
5. The sermon outline, "Before the World Began," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/before-the-world-began.pdf>.
4. The sermon outline, "Adoption as Sons of God," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/sons-of-god.pdf>.
7. The sermon outline, "Eternal Life Is a Gift," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/eternal-life-is-a-gift.pdf>.
8. The sermon outline, "The Book of Life," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/book-of-life.pdf>.
9. Consider animal sacrifices acceptable for atonement (Leviticus 1:4; 7:18; 19:7; 22:20; 22:21,23; 22:25,27; 23:11).