

Salvation Is of the Lord

Sunday, September 11th, 1988

Ephesians 1:3-14

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ 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; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: That the dispensation of the fullness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom after ye believed, ye were seated with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory”.

I am going to bring a message today on the subject: “SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.” This passage of Scripture is written in Jonah Chapter 2 verse 9 and again, in the Book of Psalms. David said, *“The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.”*

Salvation is a miracle; it is a miracle of God’s love and a miracle of God’s grace and a miracle of God’s wisdom. They hymn writers put it this way:

It took a miracle to put the stars in space
It took a miracle to hang the world in place.
But when God saved my soul
When God cleansed and made me whole
It took a miracle of His love and His grace.

“Salvation is of the Lord.” Charles Spurgeon said in a message that he preached over a hundred years ago, “Salvation is of the Lord in its origination. God planned it. Salvation is of the Lord in its execution; God carried it out by sending His Son into the world to be

our Redeemer. Salvation is of the Lord in its application; God revealed His Son in us. Salvation is of the Lord in its sustaining power; *'We are kept by the power of God through faith.'* Salvation is of the Lord in its ultimate perfection." He said, "In blazing across the sky throughout eternity will be these words, Glory to God; salvation is of the Lord."

I'm not going to take the time to point out all the foolishness and the complete folly of what most preachers and churches call salvation. The presumption that is associated with walking to the front of the church. Salvation is not a physical move.

Salvation is coming to Christ in the heart. It is not coming to the front of the church or to an altar or to a mourner's bench. Salvation is not walking to the front of the church. It is not responding to altar calls at all.

It is not praying the sinner's prayer, or making a decision. I'm not going to point those things out. I think most of you see the folly in all of these physical moves that they call salvation.

I want you to turn with me to Chapter One of the Book of Ephesians. This is one of Apostle Paul's Epistles. This is the Epistle to the Ephesians.

If you want to learn something about this miracle of redemption, if you really and sincerely in your heart want to know how God saves sinners, and who it is that saves sinners, and how sinners are saved, then let's lay our traditions and our prejudices aside and come to the Word of God with an open heart. Come with a hungry heart and a willing heart and listen to what He has to say about salvation and redemption.

In Ephesians Chapter One, I want you to see what the Apostle Paul writes about the great work of the Divine Trinity, (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). The Lord our God is one God. He reveals Himself definitely as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I want you to see in the words of Paul, the great work of the blessed Trinity in the redemption of a sinner.

You may draw your own conclusions. I will just read the Scripture, make a comment or two, and when we come to the end of this message, see what you believe about this matter of salvation. *"Salvation is of the Lord."*

Let's turn to Ephesians One; you have it there in your Bible. I'm speaking from Chapter 1:3. We will skip the salutation. Here in verse 3 Paul says this, *"God the Father of our*

Lord Jesus Christ; blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ.”

God the Father is the moving cause of salvation. The Scripture says, *“The Father blessed us; He blessed us.”* He is the source; He is the fountain; He is the giver, He is the designer and He is the one that purposed this whole affair. *“He, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath blessed us.”*

He is the fountain of all mercy; *“Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from God; every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father.”* Do you see that? *“He blessed us. The Father blessed us.”* This is the Supreme blessing. This is the extreme and great blessing. *“He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings.”*

These spiritual blessings come together; it is one blessing. We are not talking about fleshly, materialistic things such as cars, jobs, homes, radio, television, boats, family, or condominiums. I’m not talking about that foolishness that will all fade away with the passing of years. These will all decay by the time you get them.

I’m talking about spiritual blessings; I am talking about life, eternal life, and eternal love! I’m talking about pardon and forgiveness of sin. I’m talking about redemption. I’m talking about righteousness, resurrection, and acceptance with God. *“He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, all spiritual blessings.”*

“In Christ we have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” This is all that a sinner needs and is all that God commands. He is all that the law requires and He is all spiritual blessings. *“He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings.”*

They are in the heavenlies. These spiritual blessings are in heavenly places and not on this earth. These spiritual blessings are literally in His presence. That is where Christ went to offer His blood. *“Not in the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself.”*

That is where our “Forerunner” has entered. It is not in a temple here on this earth, but within the veil. That is where the Forerunner is. That is where Christ is. That is where He is seated. *“He is seated at the right-hand of God.”*

All of these blessings, these spiritual blessings are ours in Christ, in the heavenlies, already sealed, already perfected, already, as the Scripture says; *“Laid up for you, undefiled which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God.”* Do you see that?

The moving cause of all mercy, the fountain of all grace, the Giver of every gift that is worth having, is the Father. *“He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ.”* I will work on that in just a moment.

Look at Ephesians 1:4, *“According as He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him.”* God blessed us. God blessed us in Christ with all spiritual blessings. He blessed us because He chose to bless us. He chose to bless us, and He chose us to be blessed.

We didn't choose Him; He chose us. Didn't our Lord say that to His beloved twelve? He said one day to them, *“You didn't choose Me; I chose you.”* We didn't love Him; He loved us. *“Herein is love, not that we loved God.”*

I can't brag about loving God, or how much I love God. I sure can rejoice in His love for me. He loved me. *“Herein is love, not that we loved God; He loved us. He gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* We didn't call Him; He called us. The hymn writer said:

Tis not that I did choose Thee
For Lord, that could not be

This heart of mine would still refuse Thee
But Thou hast chosen me

“He blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ according as He chose us.” He chose us in Christ. He is the first-born. “Christ be My first elect” God said, and then chose His people in their Head, Christ.

He chose us not because we were holy; He chose us that we should be holy, that we should be delivered from sin and that we should be righteous. He chose us in Christ in order that we might be holy.

When did He choose us? *“He chose us before the world began, “before the foundation of the world.”* God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He said, *“I am the Lord; I change not.”* God never changes. God is unchangeable. *“Known unto God are all His works from the beginning. He declareth the end from the beginning.”*

Let me ask you three questions, three simple, simple questions: Did you choose God or did He choose you? Will you answer according to the Scriptures? You say, “Well,

preacher; *He chose me.*” That is what the Word of God says, *“He chose me.”* Why did He choose me? The reason has to be in Himself. *“He chose me.”*

When did He choose you? When did God choose you? There may be someone who will come along and say, *“When we believed.”* That is not what the Word of God says, it says; *“He chose us before the foundation of the world.”*

Paul says in Second Thessalonians *“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. God chose us before the world began.”*

Here is the third question: God chose you and He chose you back in the beginning. Why did He choose you? Why you, and why me? Why did He pass by thousands, yea, millions and set His affection on us? Why did He choose us?

The Scripture says, *“He chose us because it seemed good in His sight. Even so, Father; it seemed good in Thy sight according to the good pleasure of His own will.”* You and I need and all people need to make a study of God’s Everlasting Covenant, that Great Shepherd of the sheep that God brought forth.

The Lord Jesus Christ that Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant was the same Covenant in which David rejoiced on his deathbed and said, *“This is all my salvation and all my desire. This is my salvation. God entered a Covenant with His Son in reference to me and that is my hope. God chose me.”*

Notice this in verse 5; verse 5 actually begins with verse 4. It says, *“According as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world; He chose us that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love having predestinated us. In love, God predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself.”*

The foundation to all spiritual blessings is the love of God. God sent His Son because He loved the world. God Almighty gave His Son to die for us because He commended His love toward us. Christ came and suffered and bled and died for us, because He loved us. *“Having loved His own; He loved them unto the end.”* He loved them; that is the love of God.

How rich, how pure, how measureless, how strong?
It shall forever more endure
The saints and angels song.

And could we with ink the ocean fill?
And where the skies of parchment made

Where every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade?

To write the love of God above
Would drain that ocean dry,

Or would the scroll contain the whole?
Though stretched from sky to sky?

This is God in love, not your love for God. This is God's love for you. It is not because you were holy but in order that you might be holy. God predestinated us to be His children.

My friends; the word predestination is used four times in the Bible and only four times. It is used twice here in Chapter One of Ephesians and it is used twice in Romans Chapter 8. Each and every time that it is used in the Word of God it has to do with the same thing; it has to do with what God will make of His elect. *"We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. We are predestinated to the adoption of children. We are predestinated to be like Jesus Christ."*

He hath determined from all eternity, that those whom He saves and those for whom Christ died; God has determined the means; God has determined the way; God has determined the events and God has determined all things, to finally bring those people to His presence to be conformed perfectly to the image of His Son Jesus Christ. That is what predestination has to do with.

Election has to do with people. Predestination has to do with the means of making those people like Christ. God has chartered the course and God has planned the path. Almighty God has set forth the way that the person is going to come, because he is going to be like Christ. He predetermined your destination. Your destination has been determined prior to the beginning of the world.

You see; Almighty God ordained Joseph to be king of Egypt. Do you understand that? Joseph is going to be king of Egypt. Before Joseph was born, Almighty God determined that Joseph would be king of Egypt. Before Joseph was ever born into his family, or before he ever had the coat of many colors, before he ever had the dream, before he ever

ran into the wrath of his brothers, he was going to be the king of Egypt. The power of God brings him to that throne.

Well, God brought him into that throne the way that you read it in the Scriptures. He was born by his father and he was one of the favorite sons. His father gave him a beautiful coat and his brothers were jealous. He came out into the field that day and his brother's wrath was kindled against him because of dreams that he had.

They cast him into a pit and sold him as a slave. He went down to Egypt and went to Potiphar's house and finally ended up in jail. He met the baker and the butcher. Wound up in the castle. Interpreted the dream and wound up on the throne.

Do you think these were accidents, chances, or fate? It was God! God predestinated it. That is the way Israel came to be in Egypt, because Joseph was there. Joseph was king. God brought him there; He predestinated it.

You might call all of these events happenings, chance, fate, or luck. You can use any word that you want to; it does not matter. *"God in love has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son."*

Look at verse 6: *"To the praise of the glory of His grace."* Now, *"He loved us; He chose us; He predetermined and predestinated us to be children."* He called us, and He gave us all these blessings that we might receive all His mercy. He did it for His own glory. It says here, *"To the praise of the glory of His grace. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."*

God will share His glory with no man. *"To the praise of the glory of His grace, He has made sinners like you and me, to be accepted in the beloved."* All the crowns will be at His feet and all the glory will be His. All the praise will be His and all the anthems will be sung in His name because He did it all, from first to last. *"God the Father be praised for His mercy to us in Christ."*

All right, the next six verses in Ephesians Chapter One the Apostle Paul talks about the work of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. *"The Father chose us; the Father predestinated us to be like Christ and the Father accepted us in the beloved."*

Here, in verse 7 it says this in talking about Christ and being accepted in the beloved, *"In whom, in Christ, we have redemption."* We have redemption in Christ. Redemption is not in the church; it is in Christ. Redemption is not in the waters of baptism, it is in Christ. Redemption is not in your merit or in the law; it is in Christ.

“We have redemption in Christ through His blood. His blood maketh atonement for the soul. His blood cleanseth us from all sin. His blood redeems us. We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

It is not according to what we deserve. We don't deserve anything, but the wages of sin. It is not according to the way we work and serve the Lord. *“It is according to the riches of His grace.”* Did you notice how many times since I have been reading in this First Chapter the term, in Christ? It says, *“He blessed us in Christ; He chose us in Christ; He accepted us in Christ, and we have redemption in Christ”* It is in Christ!

Jesus Christ, God's Son, the God-man, came into this world as our representative, *“Made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were born under the law. And, as a man, as the God-Man, the perfect Man; He fulfilled all righteousness.”*

You see; *“By one man (Adam) and by his disobedience we were made sinners.”* We were not put on probation. We were not put on trial. *“We were made sinners. Even so, by the obedience of the perfect Man, the God-Man, the Son of man, and Son of God; we were made righteous.”*

The God-man went to the tree; Calvary's cross, and died for our sins. There, *“He was wounded for our transgression. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was literally laid Him and by His stripes we are healed.”* We have redemption!

It is not that we are going to have it; we already have it. It is done! *“The great transaction is done. I am my Lord's and He is mine.”* He bought me and He redeemed me. I have redemption through His blood. I have the forgiveness of sin. He forgave us.

Look at verse 9: *“And He made known unto us the mystery of God's will.”* You can't know God except in Christ. You can't know God, except as you know Christ. They said, *“Show us the Father.”* He said, *“Have I been so long time with you and you don't know Me? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.”*

This is the work of the Son in redemption. The Father chose us, the Father made the Covenant; the Father predestinated what we will be and *“The Father accepted us in the beloved.”* It is in the beloved that we are redeemed. It is in the beloved that we have forgiveness of sin. It is in the beloved that we know God. It is in the beloved that the mystery of God's will and the mystery of God's character and God's Holiness and Justice are revealed to us.

“He made known unto us the mystery of God’s will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself that in the dispensation of the fullness of time, He might gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him.”

Now, watch verse 10. Note this carefully; this is good, *“In Christ we have obtained an inheritance.”* People talk about their inheritance. They talk about their reward; they talk about going to heaven and entering their reward.

Our inheritance is in Christ, and in Christ we have obtained it and received it freely. *“He who knew no sin, was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”* *“In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and you are complete in Him: Being predestinated according to His purpose which He purposed in Himself.”*

Salvation is no accident. Did you hear that word (purpose)? God said, *“I purposed it; I’ll do it. I have spoken it; I will bring it to pass. He worketh all things after His own council and purpose.”* Here is a familiar Scripture: *“For we know all things work together for good, to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. Who worketh all things after the council of His own will.”*

Who’s will? Is it my will or your will? No, it is God’s will. *“It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, it is of God that showeth mercy. To as many as have received Christ to them gave He the power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His name which were born not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but born of the will of God.”*

Now, look at verse 12: You will see this all the way through, *“That we should be to the praise of the glory of His grace who first trusted in Christ.”* This theme runs throughout this First Chapter and throughout the Word of God; *“God will be glorified.”*

In our day of religion, we are glorifying everything, and everybody, in every way, but God Almighty. God will be glorified. You see; He chose us to the praise of His glory. Christ died for us, that we should be to the praise of His glory.

Look at verse 13: *“In whom, in Christ, you trusted and you believed after you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.”* What did you hear? You heard the truth about God; you heard the truth about yourself; you heard the truth about sin; you heard the truth about Christ; you heard the truth about His redemptive work and you believed

that truth. *“In whom, also after you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise to the praise of the glory of His Grace.”*

There is the Divine Trinity. The Father chose us; the Father predestinated us; the Father called us and the Father accepted us. The Son redeemed us and the Son enlightened us. The Son enriched us and the Holy Ghost brought the Gospel to these dumb, dead hearts and gave us ears to hear and hearts to believe.

When we believe, He sealed us in God. He sealed us forever. All of this is to the *“Praise of the glory of His grace.”*