

## Ephesians 1:11-14

Last week's text focused on the reality of redemption. Redemption is found only in Christ and, even more specifically, only through the blood of Christ which is the sufficient and efficacious means of forgiveness. If Jesus did not die for us we would have no hope of being ransomed, but because Jesus shed His own blood, we can be forgiven. Accordingly, Christ has "lavished" grace upon us! This week, we will get into a few of the particulars regarding the process that God went through to redeem His people.

1. God seeks His children
  - a. We must notice that the word "predestined" returns in v. 11
  - b. This is the second time the word is used in chapter 1
    - i. In v. 5 we read that God "predestined us for adoption"
    - ii. Going back a bit, we gain some clarity as to the scope of this act learning that this predestinating act took place "before the foundation of the world"
    - iii. The point that Paul is driving home here is repeated, in multiple ways, in the opening portion of this book
  - c. Paul is telling us that it is God who orchestrated, ordained and set out to accomplish His work of redemption and He did this alone
    - i. Later we will learn that even the faith we exercise in Christ is a "gift of God" (Chapter 2:8-9) and this means that all of the glory goes to God in our salvation
  - d. The larger truth in play in this portion of chapter 1 is that God is the catalyst and Lord over every moment/decision in history
    - i. Notice the phraseology here: God "works all things according to the counsel of His will" (v. 11)
    - ii. There is nothing that happens (including our salvation!) that is not in accordance with God's work and will
    - iii. Every single event is predestined according to God
      1. Does this make God the author of sin? Hardly! It makes Him Lord over all sinners and every sinful circumstance
      2. God has proven that He can bring beauty out of ashes
      3. He demonstrates His character and Sovereignty in taking that which was meant for evil and utilizing it for good (see Genesis 50:20)
      4. He does not deny the depravity of man or the volition of man but He does exercise faithful authority over all things and this includes our salvation

- e. What Paul is jealous for is God's glory
  - i. If you are a believer today, it is not because you are better, smarter, more righteous or made better decisions in your flesh!
  - ii. You are a believer because the Lord devised a plan in eternity past to accomplish redemption and sought you, as His child, to be reconciled to Him
  - iii. God is the "hound of heaven" who identifies His own and seeks them with unrelenting and effectual grace
- 2. God saves through the faith of His children
  - a. These things do not deny the necessity of our own personal faith
  - b. No one is saved without exercising faith in Christ
  - c. We see this truth nicely in v. 13
    - i. Only those who "believed in him" are "sealed with the promise"
  - d. Some people struggle with the sovereignty of God over all things because they, rightly, feel that they made a choice to follow Christ
    - i. It is fundamentally accurate to say that we choose to follow Jesus
    - ii. This explains the numerous places in Scripture that command and exhort believers to "follow" or "believe"
    - iii. It is crucial, and necessary, for lost men to believe the problem arises when people root their belief in their own, natural abilities
      - 1. If you cannot see the Lord's grace in seeking and leading you to repentance then I would encourage you to look again
      - 2. Faith is a response to the Lord's drawing
        - a. It is a reaction, as is mentioned here, to the Word of truth
        - b. But that Word of truth is "veiled" to those who are perishing (2 Corinthians 4:3)
        - c. What we need is Someone to rip the blinders off of our eyes and, once that happens, faith is the obvious response to the glory we see
  - e. There are such things as primary and secondary causes in this life... we must have a category for them
    - i. The primary cause is that which moves first. It is the thing that is absolutely necessary for any further action. Secondary causes are what inevitably follow whatever is primary
    - ii. For instance: My children will sometimes complain in the summer that the blacktop of the driveway "burned them"
      - 1. That is true! They were scorched by the pavement

2. Nevertheless, it is only “secondarily” true
  - a. The pavement is not inherently hot
  - b. It is only hot when the sun warms the driveway
3. No sun, no warmth, no warmth, no burning
4. This does not change the validity of their statement, but it does influence the way we understand the order of necessity
- f. In the same way. It is fundamentally true that all men are saved by faith (faith that they personally exercise!) but that is not the primary cause. There would be no faith without God for a myriad of reasons:
  - i. You would have no mind without God
  - ii. You would have no knowledge without God
  - iii. You would have no breath without God
  - iv. And, according to Scripture, you would have no sight, in your sin, unless God moved to give it to you
    1. In this way, God must move first, if the Lord simply waited on us to “do the right thing”, we would be hopeless and rendered powerless in the shackles of our sin
    2. This is incredibly important when we consider who gets the glory
3. God seals His children
  - a. The beauty of this text is really grounded in the security of redemptive truth
  - b. Paul uses a term here that is beautiful when unpacked
  - c. The effect of saving faith is that we were “sealed with the promised Spirit”... what does this mean?
  - d. It means that we are protected and preserved by the Spirit
    - i. The Spirit seals us, thereby presenting us with a “guarantee” of God’s salvation (2 Corinthians 1:22)
    - ii. When God indwells our hearts, His very presence should be reassuring because His moving in comes with a promise that He will never move out!
    - iii. There is no such thing as losing your salvation
      - a. Those who are foreknown are predestined and those who are predestined are called and those who are called are justified and those who are justified are glorified (Romans 8:29-30). ALL OF THEM!
    - iv. We can celebrate today if we are found to be “in Christ”. Those who have been saved cannot be “unsaved” and this is gloriously freeing!