

EPHESIANS 1:6 THE GLORY OF GOD'S GRACE, THE BELOVED

Our Highest Destiny

Your highest destiny is described in verse 6. Why has God predestined us to sonship and holiness and blamelessness and love? Verse 6: "To the praise of the glory of his grace." Our holiness and our blamelessness and our love and our sonship are not ends in themselves. They exist for something greater: the praise of the glory of God's grace.

The ultimate goal of God in election and predestination is that God might be praised for his glory. And the highest point of that glory is grace. This is the final goal of our destiny. There is no higher hope, no greater tomorrow, no more meaningful future, no more worthy cause to live for, than to reflect and praise the glory of God's grace forever and ever.

The certainty of that destiny is grounded in the freedom of God and the all-sufficient work of his Son Jesus. John Piper

1. GOD'S GLORY

THE ULTIMATE MOTIVE, THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE

A. DESCRIPTION

The essential nature of God, The sum total of His attributes

Hebrews 1:3 brightness and effulgence

Beauty, majesty, splendor, greatness, might, eternity

1 Kings 8 Exodus 40:34 Isa 6:1-4

Luke 2:14, John 1:14, 2 Cor 4:6

B. DISPLAYED IN ALL GOD DOES

1. Nature Psalm 19:1, Ps 8: The glory of God is displayed in everything that God does. It is to be seen in nature.

2. History Flood, Exodus, Red Sea, Jordan River, Mt Sinai

3. Redemption

4. Righteousness Rom 3:25-26 The glory of God is revealed in His holiness and righteousness.

5. Through us Eph 3:10, John 17:10, Matthew 5:16

6. GRACE

Above all else the glory of God has been revealed to us in grace.

1 WHAT IS THE GRACE OF GOD?

Grace is God's unearned rich generosity to moral paupers just like you. Grace is the unmerited favor of God to hell-deserving sinners. Grace is God acting freely and redemptively, according to his own nature as love, and accomplishing the salvation of favored fallen men and women. Grace presents sinners with no obligations that they have to fulfill, and no ultimatums. It comes from God's love for you a cold and bored rebel in God's willingness to rescue you. In other words, if you were to be treated justly by God then there'd be no alternative to his condemning you for what you are and what you've done. But God, who is under no obligation at all to be anything but straight with you, instead of condemning you, has come to you in love and through Christ blessed you with every spiritual blessing, chosen you to be saved and adopted you as his child. The motive he has for acting towards you in this wonderful way comes wholly from within himself. It lies in his character and not in ours. The roots of grace go deep into

eternity into the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Spontaneously, when there was no outward pressure being brought upon God to behave in this way - before there were men or angels who might have suggested certain things for him to do, when there was no one at all, then God determined to be gloriously good and kind to his enemies. He made up his mind that he would love the unlovely; he would pardon all their sins, even when they killed his only Son; he would accept the elect and reveal himself to them; he would move them to understand and obey him; he would bring them to a full knowledge and enjoyment of himself. He would glorify them in heaven.

The ultimate goal of divine election, that is to say, the pre-eminent reason why God did not leave all humanity in the just reward of their sin, was so that the glory of his grace might be praised. Election was undertaken to establish a platform on which the glory of God's saving grace might be seen and magnified and adored and praised. Thus we see again here a consistent theme in Scripture: all that God does, he ultimately does, **to glorify himself!**

2. ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED

This is one of the most magnificent phrases in the Bible. We are accepted, or highly favored in the beloved.

A. HOW GOD HAS MANIFESTED HIS GLORY IN SALVATION

In the Beloved—This is HOW God has manifested His glory in our salvation

Every blessing we have is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's glory is revealed ultimately and finally and most completely through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is mentioned over and over throughout this first chapter of Ephesians. And then in verse 6, a different term is used, (in the Beloved) Why change to this name? Every detail in scripture is important. You will always discover jewels if you look hard enough.

It is great that we are chosen, holy, and adopted; but the highest peak is how He did this. It was in the Beloved ! This is so key. This is the key to the mystery of the Incarnation and all that God has done in His Son. Jesus is God's only begotten Son. The Beloved is the term that emphasizes this truth. See the following verses.

B. WHERE GOD USES THE TERM BELOVED

Matthew 3:17, 17:5, 21:37, Col 1:13 Each time the veil of heaven is drawn back a little. We get a little glimpse of the eternal glory through the Son.

We are adopted sons, but Jesus is Son by eternal generation. The Beloved is the eternal Son.

We are holy and adopted and as a result we are to live to the praise of the glory of God's grace. The world is to see God's glory through us. But God's glory is

manifested most in the Son. Heb 1:1-3, Jn 1:14, Col 2:9

The highest manifestation of the glory of God in coming to this earth in the person of Christ the Son, the Beloved. He is one with the Father whom the Father has loved all eternity. The Son has always enjoyed the total love of God, so this term—of the Beloved is the perfect way to express Him.

C. MEASURE OF THE FATHER'S LOVE

It is in Christ that we measure the love of God truly. Just to realize God sent Him into this world is staggering. But to think that the Father has always loved the Son eternally, we can't fathom.

We cannot begin to understand that the Father sent the Son into the sinful and evil world. He knew men would revile His Son, laugh at Him, scorn Him, and crucify Him. They would refuse His Beloved. They despised Him, scourged and hated Him. He did not spare the Beloved.

2 Cor 5:21 he made His Son a sin offering for us, that we would have the righteousness of God

D. MEASURE OF THE SON'S LOVE

Look at the self-emptying at the Incarnation while He had been with the Father from all eternity, in glory. How He suffered in His limitations.

Psalm 22:1

What a view of the depth of His love.

E. OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

So far, we have been dealing with His relationship to God.

Now we look at our relationship to God.

We are called, chosen to holiness, have sonship, and praise God's glory.

Even greater is that we are to be loved by God even as He has loved His Son. !

John 17:23, Colossians 3:12, 2 Thess 2:13

This is an intimacy of communion with God that we share with the Son.

He loves us as he loves the Son Himself.

Col 3:12—We are the beloved of God.

This is the ultimate blessing of our salvation. This is as high as the summit goes.

Have you ever thought that God is unfair? That God has been unkind to you?

Stop it. We are the beloved of God.

John Calvin—The Son of God became the Son of man, that the sons of men might be made the sons of God. And even beloved.