

The 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
July 11, 2021

"All praise to the Triune God for the riches of His grace from eternity to eternity!"  
(Ephesians 1:5-7).  
By Rev. Ed Weber

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today's text for this 7th Sunday after Pentecost is from our Epistle reading –  
Ephesians 1:5-7

**“having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace”**

Here ends our text.

You may have noticed that I'm jumping into our text right in the middle of the sentence. It's hard to pick one verse from our epistle reading to choose for a text. Why? Because verses 3-14 are one, big, long sentence. It is the main passage in the New Testament that teaches us about the doctrine of election. What a comforting doctrine this is to the penitent sinner! What is election? Well, let's let Scripture itself teach us this morning. Let's go back to verse 3, the very start of this sentence and hear God's word verse by verse.

**v.3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”**

We begin by giving all praise to the Triune God. Why? Because in a moment of time, at a moment of time which differs for each one of us, each of us who were lost, were converted and became children of God. It is in this moment that He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Every spiritual blessing! Our salvation and eternal life is complete! It is from heaven,

given to us by the Holy Spirit and it lacks nothing! We have everything in Christ! We have no spiritual blessing except through and on account of Christ.

And lest you think this was a whimsical decision by God, Paul reveals to us what was the cause of our receiving every spiritual blessing – in Christ. Paul takes us back to before the foundation of the world – when there was nothing. For that is when we hear this amazing truth as we continue to verse 4.

**v. 4 “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,”**

We pause for a moment to let each of take this in and reflect on it. He chose you. He picked you to be His. He claimed us as His very own, His own possession; He determined that we were to be and remain His own for all eternity!

Can you see how the doctrine of election is full of such comfort? This wasn't just a flip of the coin to decide if we're going to have hamburgers or pizza for dinner. This was God choosing you before you were born, before the world was born, to be His, again, “in Him”, in Jesus, planning for your redemption through Jesus, and calling you, in time, to believe in Jesus as your Savior. Every spiritual blessing was planned and given to you in Christ. All praise to God!

What is our election? Listen to verse 5 of our text again.

**v. 5 “having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,”**

Wow! We who were sons of the evil one because of our sinfulness, God adopted in time as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself. We're His! He made us His not because of any good in me or you, but purely according to the good pleasure of His will. God alone willed us to be His sons and daughters. Again, the next verse gives all praise to God alone!

**v. 6 “to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He bestowed on us in the Beloved.”**

It is His grace alone that He bestowed on us in Jesus that makes us His. What grace He richly lavishes on us! Listen again to the next verse from our text.

**v. 7-8 “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us in all wisdom and understanding”**

You may ask yourself, but am I one of the chosen? The predestined? Then ask yourself if you believe that John 3:16 applies to you.

**“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”**

If you say yes, this verse applies to me, it is because the Holy Spirit has blessed you with faith to say that Jesus is your Lord and you believe in Him. You have received “every spiritual blessing” of salvation and everlasting life when you were adopted into God’s family. What God predestined you have received. Yes, you are chosen! And God will continue to keep you in this faith so that you do not perish.

Yes, in Him we have redemption. Jesus redeemed the whole world from sin and that includes you and me! Where there is redemption by the shedding of Jesus’ blood, there is forgiveness of sins!

As John wrote in his first epistle which we heard on the Sunday after Easter, **“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”**

Yes, it is by God’s grace, the riches of His grace that you and I, miserable sinners, have been chosen, redeemed and in time, blessed with every spiritual blessing!

You see it couldn’t be anything but by grace that we are saved because we were completely in darkness until He revealed His saving will to us. And that is what Paul says in the very next verse.

**v.9 “having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,”**

The mystery of salvation was revealed to us which God alone planned and purposed in Himself according to His good pleasure. How could anyone take credit for something God willed even before the creation of the world? How could anyone say “I’ve decided to follow Jesus”, when it was God alone who wills and reveals His love in Jesus to rebellious sinners. If there is one thing that the doctrine

of election teaches us is that it is all by grace from start to finish! From eternity to eternity!

And let's talk about that finish now, our finish which again is by grace alone. For God's election is from eternity, before time began, to eternity. Listen to the joys that await God's elect in the next verses.

**v.10-12 “that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.”**

Who is doing the gathering? God alone! Who is He gathering in the fullness of the times? The whole Christian Church! All those He has chosen! Those in heaven who have finished their earthly race in the faith and those who are still on earth, running the race, again, in Christ!

Wow! We see the big picture from eternity to eternity! What God willed in Christ from before the foundations of the world, He has gathered together. He has gathered already some in heaven, our loved ones in Christ, and continues to gather His sons and daughters in the body of Christ, our Head, right now on earth.

Who are those chosen and gathered into His Holy Christian Church? Paul speaks first of the Jewish believers who first trusted in Christ to the praise of His glory.

And when Paul speaks of an inheritance, he doesn't speak of it as something only in the future. No, he says that we “have obtained an inheritance”. It's in the believers' possession right now! What is? Eternal life.

But, what about the Gentiles? What about us? Listen to verse 13. It is especially for you and me!

**v. 13 “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”**

“You also trusted”, that is, you Gentiles, as Paul writes to the Ephesians. And this same word has been heard by your ears so that you trusted the word of truth, the gospel of salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit!

Yes, you also having believed, have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. What God purposed before the foundations of the world for you He has sealed to you in the Gospel of salvation in Jesus by the Holy Spirit. What is the Spirit’s promise to you? The same promise that is to the Jewish believers – the inheritance of the Kingdom of heaven!

Listen finally in verse 14 to how the Holy Spirit is our guarantee until we enter our eternal inheritance.

**v 14 “who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”**

Until then, Paul finishes chapter one praying for the Ephesians to grow in wisdom and understanding, **“that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power...”**

You who are sealed by the Holy Spirit. Your election is eternally secure.

And it is our fervent and daily prayer that we too would continue to grow in the knowledge of the hope of our calling...to know what are the riches of the glory of our inheritance with all the saints.

All praise to the glory of the Triune God for the riches of His grace from eternity to eternity.

**Amen.**

**The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**