

Prison Epistles Week Two Outline

I. Introduction

- A. Personal story: Fishing at Thompkins Landing road by St. Mary's river
- B. The river as metaphor - no defined beginning or end, always flowing
- C. Salvation like the ever-flowing river - source upstream before foundation of world
- D. Main point: Story started with God's sovereign grace, not our strength

II. Context and Structure of Ephesians 1:3-14

A. First-century Ephesus

- 1. Wealthy port city in Asia Minor
- 2. Famous for Temple of Artemis (one of Seven Wonders)
- 3. Identity and security from temple, guild, Roman Empire
- 4. Small church planted in shadow of paganism

B. Literary structure

- 1. Single sentence of 200+ words in Greek
- 2. Written as doxology (worship), not argument
- 3. Main verb: "BLESSED be the God and Father"
- 4. All following clauses explain WHY God is blessed

C. Trinitarian division

- 1. Work of the Father (verses 3-6)
- 2. Work of the Son (verses 7-12)
- 3. Work of the Holy Spirit (verses 13-14)
- 4. Each section ends with "to the praise of his glorious grace"

III. The Father's Sovereign Grace (Verses 3-6)

A. Verse 3: Blessed with every spiritual blessing

- 1. "Blessed" (eulogētos) - worthy of praise
- 2. "In the heavenly places in Christ"

B. Verse 4: God chose us

1. Greek: *exelexato* - to select from among others
2. "Before the foundation of the world"
3. Before human works, merit, or faith
4. Purpose: "that we would be holy and blameless"

C. Verse 5: Predestined to adoption

1. Decided beforehand, marked out destiny in advance
2. Greco-Roman adoption gave full inheritance rights
3. Adopted child could never be removed from family
4. "According to the kind intention of His will"

D. Verse 6: To the praise of His glorious grace

1. God's goal: display beauty of His grace
2. "We get the grace, and He gets the glory"
3. God's glory and our good perfectly aligned

IV. The Son's Redeeming Blood (Verses 7-12)

A. Verse 7: Redemption through His blood

1. "Redemption" (*apolytrōsis*) - from marketplace and Exodus
2. Substitutionary atonement - Christ died in our place
3. "Forgiveness" (*aphesis*) - release, sending away
4. Sins carried off, no longer counted against believer
5. No further sacrifice needed (unlike Temple of Artemis)

B. Verse 8: Grace lavished in wisdom and insight

1. "Lavished" (*eperisseusen*) - God's generosity is thoughtful
2. Intentional, not accidental

C. Verses 9-10: Mystery of His will revealed

1. "Mystery" (*mystērion*) - once hidden, now revealed in Christ
2. Purpose: "to unite all things in him"

D. Verses 11-12: Inheritance secured

1. "We have obtained an inheritance"
2. Predestined according to His purpose
3. God "works all things according to counsel of his will"
4. God's exhaustive sovereignty over all events
5. "To the praise of his glory"

V. The Spirit's Sealing and Guarantee (Verses 13-14)

- A. Verse 13: Sealed with the Holy Spirit
 1. Sequence: hear gospel → believe → sealed
 2. "Sealed" (sphragizō) - mark of ownership, authenticity, security
 3. Ancient seals marked important property
- B. Verse 14: The Spirit as guarantee
 1. "Guarantee" (arrabōn) - down payment securing future payment
 2. Spirit's presence pledges God will finish what He started
 3. Assurance is Trinitarian: Father planned, Son paid, Spirit pledges
 4. "To the praise of His glory"

VI. Grace and Sovereignty Held Together

- A. "Charis" (grace) - God's saving kindness throughout passage
- B. Three references to "praise of his glorious grace" and "riches of his grace"
- C. No room for human boasting or bargaining
- D. Grace as ultimate display of God's beauty
- E. Sovereignty and grace not in tension
- F. Election gives confidence in evangelism - God has people who will respond

VII. Practical Application: Living Under Grace

- A. Question: How does this apply to daily life?
 1. Stay-at-home mom changing diapers
 2. Dad working extra shifts

3. Waiting in doctor's office

4. Young person starting out in life

B. First application: Step off treadmill of spiritual performance

1. Every spiritual blessing already ours in Christ
2. Not earning God's favor but walking in favor already given
3. Our performance doesn't earn or cost us God's grace

C. Second application: Face suffering with deep assurance

1. God "works all things according to counsel of his will"
2. Same God who chose, adopted, redeemed, and sealed us
3. Nothing falls outside God's wise, gracious plan
4. Whatever happens is under sovereign hand of good and loving God
5. Must choose to trust Him regardless of circumstances

D. Third application: Live "to the praise of his glory"

1. Grace produces worship, obedience, and mission
2. Not apathy
3. Sovereignly loved from eternity past
4. Spend earthly life making much of God who saved us

VIII. Conclusion

A. Final emphasis: "To the praise of His glory"