

Chosen Saints

2025-09-20 – Ephesians 1:1-14



As he awaited trial in Rome for the sake of the Gospel, Paul wrote a letter to Christians encouraging them to stand tall in the face of persecution and spiritual warfare, calling them saints and reminding them that they were chosen by God before the foundation of the world. His message for the first century church is still true today. Come join us this week as we consider what it means that we are chosen saints.

Good morning. If you've got your Bibles, I want to invite you to open to Ephesians 1:1. Today, we are going to dig into the first two sentences in the letter to the Ephesians, and I am excited for today. The new series we are starting for this fall is called **"One Body: Saints Standing Side by Side."** The image behind me is the image from the end of the book of Ephesians because, if you are here and you are a believer, we are called daily to wear the armor of God (Ephesians 6:11). That is armor that we wear for ourselves and we wear for the person on our left and on our right. The imagery of the armor of God at the end of Ephesians is the imagery of the Roman army that was famous. The Roman army was famous because they never lost ground. The Roman army, the men who served in the military, would serve together for 20 years. They would put on their shields, swords, helmets, breastplates, belts, and shoes, and they would go, and when they went to battle, they would never lose an inch. They would always gain ground. At the end of the letter of Ephesians, the imagery that Paul gives the church is that we are to think that way in this world (Ephesians 6:13). We are to set ourselves in the battles of this world, thinking about the true enemy (Ephesians 6:12). In Ephesians 6:12, Paul says, "Our battle is not against flesh and blood, but it is against the very forces of evil. It is against the devil and his minions." And we see their influence in this world, don't we?

You know, this image has been here in my head—here, it hasn't been back here—but it's been the image for this fall since June. When we were praying and planning out this year, this image of battle was ready to go in June, not knowing what was going to happen 11 days ago. I bring this up as we start because I want this image fresh in your mind each and every week you come in, because when we come together as a body, we need to recognize that we are one body in a world that is at war with the gospel (Ephesians 4:4-5). If we do not set the right battle line, we will not be ready for what is to come. Brothers and sisters, as we begin this series, I want to encourage you each and every day to take seriously that when we come together, we need to wear our armor.

We're going to start today at the beginning of Ephesians, and we're going to talk about what it means that you, if you are a believer, you are a saint. You may hear those words and you may say, "I'm not a saint. That's reserved for someone who's done a lot more than I." But by the end of today, I'm gonna convince you that if you are a follower of Jesus, the title for you is, "You are a saint." As a saint, as a holy one of God, you are called to stand firm in the battle at hand. So today, I'm gonna pray right now, and I'm gonna pray for our service, and I'm gonna pray that we would all put on the armor of God. If you're a believer, I wanna encourage you, each and every week, before you walk through the doors of this church, on Sunday morning, pray the armor of God on. You should do it every day, but you should do it every Sunday through this series. If you come in and you forgot, when you see this image, pray like I'm going to pray right now. Because, brothers and sisters, we are in a world at war. We see the evil at hand. We see the narratives of the world. We see the way that the world hates truth (John 15:18-19). The world hated the light so much that when he came among us, they nailed him to a tree (John 19:16-18). Do not be surprised by the schemes of the evil one (2 Corinthians 2:11). We are not unaware, but stand ready together (Ephesians 6:11).

To that end, let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank You. We thank You, Lord, as we talk about "we are one body," we thank You that Your Son is the head of the body that is Your church (Ephesians 1:22-23). We pray, Lord, that as we gather together today, we would take seriously the calls and commands of the letter to the Ephesians. We praise You, Lord, for Paul and for his ministry and the way You work through him and the hope and inspiration we can take from the way he followed You. We pray, Lord, that we would take seriously the call to put on the armor (Ephesians 6:11), Lord, for all the believers in here. Lord, I pray even now we would put on the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, and the shoes of gospel peace (Ephesians 6:14-17). I pray we would have the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and the shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16-17), that we would just block the fiery darts of the evil one.

Lord, I pray that we would be prepared as a body for whatever comes. I pray, Lord, You would help us to see the right battle lines. Lord, I pray Your Spirit would be moving even now, that You would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what Your word has to say. Father, I pray that the truths of Ephesians 1 would sink in and we would feel so encouraged and we would feel ready to stand for what You have called us to. Father, I pray that these would be Your words and not mine, that You would speak to me and speak through me. We thank You, Lord, for Your Son, the one who, through Him, You have lavished on us such incredible grace (Ephesians 1:6-7). We pray all of this in the name of Jesus, amen.

To be a saint who stands ready for battle, you must believe....

Well, our goal today is **To be saints who stand ready for battle.**

In order to do that at the beginning of Ephesians, there are things that you must believe. If you are a believer in Christ, there are things that you must believe in order to stand strong for the

battle at hand. We're going to start by reading Ephesians 1:1-2, and then we'll read one more sentence.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will. To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus. Grace to you and peace from God our Father in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:1-2 CSB

Ephesians 1 begins, ***"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will. To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus, grace to you and peace from God our Father in the Lord Jesus Christ"*** (Ephesians 1:1-2).

In these opening words comes a lot of context we need to have to read this letter well. First and foremost, Paul is an apostle of Christ Jesus, and his authority to be an apostle is not from his greatness, it's not from his goodness, it's not from his ability to argue the gospel, it's not from his missionary work, it's not from all of the things he has done, it's not from the way he helped transform Roman cities for the gospel, none of that. He's an apostle by God's will (Ephesians 1:1).

It is God's authority upon which Paul's authority rests. Paul, when he writes this letter, is not saying, "Because I've done so many things for the church, listen to me." He is saying, "God chose me for this purpose." ***Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will*** (Ephesians 1:1). He then says, ***"To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus"*** (Ephesians 1:1). When we read that word "saints," you may think that Paul is talking to the upper echelon of believers, but he's talking to each and every believer that he is writing to. Because the word "saint" in Scripture is not about someone who's done a certain number of miracles or someone who's a certain level of holy or anything like that. It means somebody who believes in Jesus and has been sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). If you are here today and you are a believer in Jesus, you are a saint. You may not believe that, but you are. You're a saint, and not in like the, "Oh, you've got the patience of a saint." When God looks at you, He sees you as a holy one of God (Ephesians 1:4). This should make you sit up a little straighter, right?

Have you ever met someone who served in the military? You can usually tell before they tell you. My little brothers both served in the military, and if you've seen me outside of up here, and even probably up here, you probably know I don't have the best posture. It is a genetic thing that, for both of my brothers, was completely broken when they served in the Air Force. I remember the first time I saw them after they served, and I was like, my little brother Mason, my youngest brother, when I first saw him, I always thought I was taller than him. I just had slightly better posture than him. After he served in the military, I realized he's taller than me. That was a blow because I'm the shortest guy in the family. But I say this because when you've seen someone who served, and who knows what it means to serve, when you've seen someone who's gone through

training, we have men here who are police officers, who have served as police officers, and you notice their posture is different. As saints, our posture should be different.

Paul, when he writes this letter, he is writing this letter to believers who are saints. I'm going to go a step further: when Paul is writing this letter, because it says, "*To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus*" (Ephesians 1:1), there is a lot of evidence that when Paul wrote this letter, it wasn't just to Ephesus. This was what was called a circular or an encyclical letter, which the idea was Paul wrote this letter not because there was an emergency for the church at Ephesus or a reason specific to them, but he wrote this letter first to go to Ephesus and then to go to the next place and the next place. This is Paul's most general letter, where he is talking to the believing body of Christ, the saints of God wholesale. So, as we read this letter, we're not gonna spend much time on, "Here's what things look like for the church at Ephesus." We're gonna spend our time saying, "We are saints, here is what we should look like." Because that is what this letter is gonna draw us to.

To be a saint who stands ready for battle, you must believe....

Our goal today is to talk about what it means to be a saint who stands ready for battle. In order to do that, there are things we must believe. Now we're going to read one more sentence. I'm going to try and get you out early to get your food ready to go for the Bears game this afternoon. But we're just going to read one more sentence, and I'll put it on the screen.

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ. For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him. He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding. He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in Christ as a plan for the right time—to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him. In him we have also received an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will, so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory. In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:3-14 CSB

No, come on. Here we go. That's the sentence. You know, it's just good that you all get that that was a joke. But this is one sentence in Greek. This is one of those sentences in Greek that, when

you realize it's all one sentence, you just have to imagine Paul when he wrote this. By the way, Paul wrote this while he was in chains. Paul wrote this probably between 60 and 62 AD in Rome, awaiting trial. In this letter Paul wrote, where he tells the believers to stand strong, put on the armor to be faithful **saints** of God (Ephesians 6:11). My favorite thing about this letter, at the end of the letter, Paul asked for prayer for himself. He's in chains in Rome. When he asks for prayer, he doesn't say, "Pray that the Lord would release me from this prison." He says, "Pray that the Lord would give me resilience to keep preaching the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19-20). At the end of this letter, Paul is not worried about the earthly battle lines, he is worried about declaring the gospel, and that is what we should worry about too.

As we come to this first sentence, I'm going to read it all, and then we will slowly break it down. I show you this sentence because this is one of the most wonderful moments. My daughter, she just started kindergarten, and there are some days she comes home and she wants to tell me things, and she just starts and talks and talks and talks and, and, and... Paul is writing like that, but he's not a kindergarten girl. He is a man who is rejoicing in the blessings that God has given, and he wants to make sure that, for the church, when they hear it, there is no pause. They just hear promise after promise of what God has done and what every **saint** should believe. So, I'm going to read this, and then we'll break it down after.

"Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ, for he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him. He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us and the beloved one. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding. He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, that he purposed in Christ as a plan for the right time, to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him. In him we have also received an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will, so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory. In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until the redemption of the possession to the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:3-14 CSB). Yeah, amen. Amen.

If you're a believer struggling with your self-worth or anxiety or depression, memorize these verses. Say these verses to yourself over and over. I talked to Steve Jensen yesterday, and he just mentioned in passing, "I've been reading Ephesians 1 through 2:7." By the way, that's three sentences, Ephesians 1:3-2:7. We'll get there next week. But he said he's been reading, and he

just feels the weight of how much God values him. When I read that out, you should feel that weight, and you should feel so loved by these words. Now we're going to break it down kind of slower because we want to really think through what are the implications of this sentence that Paul says. Because to be saints who stand ready for battle, there are things we must believe.

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ. For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be **holy** and blameless in love before him. He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of **his will**, to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One.

Ephesians 1:3-6 CSB

So, I'm going to read verses three through six and then dig in. ***"Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ"*** (Ephesians 1:3). With that opening verse, we are seeing everything after this—these are the blessings that He has blessed us with. ***"For he chose us in him before the foundation of the world to be **holy** and blameless in love before him. He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of **his will**, to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the beloved one"*** (Ephesians 1:4-6).

To be a **saint who stands ready for battle, you must believe....**

- You were chosen for sainthood before creation
- You are a child of God through the work of Jesus Christ
- You have been lavished with the grace of God

There are three things in this opening paragraph I want to draw your attention to. The first one is that, if you are a believer, **You were chosen for sainthood before creation** (Ephesians 1:4). Before God said, 'Let there be light,' He knew you and He chose you (Ephesians 1:4).

Now, there's two ways you can hear these words. You can hear these words intellectually and say, 'Well, what does that mean for free will and predestination and this and that,' and you can go down a rabbit trail that has no earthly solution because we do not see how God sees (Ephesians 1:4). Or you can hear those words and let them come crashing down upon you that **He chose you before creation began** (Ephesians 1:4).

My daughter, Lucy, I remember when Jess told me, "We're pregnant." At that moment, that was the first moment I knew I'm a father. I remember that moment. It's one of the most vivid memories in my life, one of the most joyous memories of my life. But before I knew that, I did not know her at all. I did not think about her at all. I wanted to have a kid someday, but it was conceptual. Before creation began, God knew you and chose you (Ephesians 1:4). You should pray that to yourself all the time. "God, thank You that You chose me before the foundation of this

world.” You should rest in that promise all the time if you are a believer. Sometimes you’ll be overwhelmed by it, and you should be, because His ways are not our ways. He sees in a way we never could, but that should just cause us to rejoice even more that He chose us.

I know what you’re thinking, Chicago Bears fans. When the Bears choose someone, within a year or two, we’re saying, “We need to choose someone new,” right? Not this year. We’re going to turn it around. 15 and 2 is still possible! But we think of chosen in a linear way. God is outside of time. Before ‘Let there be light,’ the Father, Son, and Spirit knew the cost. And they still said it, ‘Let there be light’ (Genesis 1:3). Just let that sink in again and again and again. I get why Paul in the Greek couldn’t put periods. He had to keep saying “and,” because when you start thinking about these things, they are so lofty and wonderful.

The next thing is **We are children of God through the work of Jesus Christ** (Ephesians 1:5). The language is we are adopted (Ephesians 1:5). The language is we become children of God by the one who chose us from before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:5). He made you His child. He will not disinherit you (Ephesians 1:5). He who made you His child is not going to turn around someday and say, ‘Never mind this one’ (Ephesians 1:5). You were chosen and you were adopted (Ephesians 1:4-5). The last part of this, because here’s what happens when I start reading this: the fiery darts of the evil one, I read, “I was chosen,” and I read, “I’m adopted, I am a child of God,” and I think, “I am not worthy of that,” right? I bet you’re feeling that when you hear this and you’re thinking about the moments of failure from this week. **Yet He lavished you with His glorious grace** (Ephesians 1:6). Grace is given what we don’t deserve. He didn’t just say, “All right, I chose him, so I gotta give him a bit of grace, give him enough to get by, give you enough to get by,” no. He lavished it (Ephesians 1:6). In a few verses, we’re going to read, He richly poured it on us (Ephesians 1:7-8). The word “rich” shows up twice. He, through the glorious riches of His grace, richly poured it out on us (Ephesians 1:7-8). He has not withheld anything. By the way, if He knew you before ‘Let there be light,’ He knew the crud, He knew the failures, He knew the sin, He knew the rebellion (Ephesians 1:4), and **He has lavished you with His grace** (Ephesians 1:6).

My son, Levi, a couple of weeks ago, we were at a playground, and my son’s got, like, a speech thing—we’re working on it. He can’t say “Lucy”; he says, like, “Loo-thee,” and it’s so stinking cute. But we’re at a playground, and a little girl hears him and goes, “You’re a baby, you’re a...”—like, she just said mean things to Levi, and he was devastated. Yeah, thank you. Thank you. He came over to me in just tears, and he said, “I got called a baby, and I got called...”—and he didn’t even know what the other word was. He’s like, “She said this,” and he’s just bawling. I looked at him, and I said, “Levi. Levi.” I always start here with my kids when they’re in sorrow. I say, “I love you.” And, “Hey, Levi, she said that about you, but whose image are you made in?” My kids know the

most important thing is we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). I said, “You are made in the image of God. God doesn’t think you’re a baby. He doesn’t think you’re this. He doesn’t think you’re that. He thinks you’re made in His image.” My son (standing a bit taller), you know, and then he ran back out. I don’t know what he said to the girl, if he tried to say, “I’m made in God’s image.” I don’t know, but he kept playing. I use this little example to tell you, in your moments when you feel low, you should start from, “I’m chosen. I’m a child adopted by God, and He has lavished me with His grace.” When you feel despair in this life, you should come back to these promises.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding. He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in Christ as a plan for the right time—to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him.

Ephesians 1:6-10 CSB

They don’t stop there. We’re only in the first third of this sentence. ***“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding. He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, that he purposed in Christ as a plan for the right time, to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him”*** (Ephesians 1:7-10).

To be a saint who stands ready for battle, you must believe....

- You have been redeemed of your sin by Christ’s blood
- You have received the grace he richly poured out on you
- You have been reconciled by God according to His good pleasure

So, not only has He chosen us and adopted us and lavished on us His glorious grace (Ephesians 1:4-6), **through the blood of His Son, our sins have been forgiven** (Ephesians 1:7). If you’re a believer out there, one of the things—I know newer believers struggle with this, and I know not newer believers struggle with this—but when I talk to newer believers, something they’ll say sometimes is, “I’m still sinning.” I’ll always say, “Well, how do you feel about it?” “I feel terrible.” “Did you feel terrible before you became a believer?” “No.” “Okay, well, that’s an improvement,” right? “Now let’s keep letting the Holy Spirit transform and work.” Because when Christ died on the cross, what did He say? He said, “It is finished, it is completed” (John 19:30). Your past, present, and future sins are covered by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7). In this life, we are trying to navigate and live up to what He has done, to be the holy ones that God has made us through the work of Christ, that He chose us to be. Now, we’re going to fall short, but when we fall short, that should just bring us back to the glory of what He has done. That is something that

should not cause us to shrink back but instead should cause us to look to what Christ has done and rest in the truth of those promises.

By the way, if you haven't noticed, everything so far was not done by you. I hope you see that. It's a consistent thing for the next five points.

You've been chosen (Ephesians 1:4). You've been adopted (Ephesians 1:5). You've had His grace lavished upon you (Ephesians 1:6). You've been redeemed of your sin by Christ's blood (Ephesians 1:7). Again, **you have received the grace He richly poured out on you** (Ephesians 1:7-8). You may say, "Matt, you've already made that point." Well, then call Paul and tell him, because he makes that point twice, because he wants to just hammer it home. You are not worthy of this (Ephesians 2:1-3). We're going to see in a chapter, you are dead in your sins, unable to make yourself alive (Ephesians 2:1). By grace, you have been saved (Ephesians 2:5). It's a work of grace that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is by God and God alone that this is done. It is by His blood, not by you earning it (Ephesians 1:7). Paul is not an apostle because of all the great things he did for God. God chose Paul by God's plan (Ephesians 1:1). He has poured His grace on us so richly (Ephesians 1:7-8). He has lavished us with it (Ephesians 1:6). We need to just rest in the wonder of that.

You have also been reconciled by God according to His good pleasure (Ephesians 1:9-10). That idea of reconciliation—if you were here last week when we talked about Revelation 22, in Ephesians 1 when it talks about you are reconciled (Ephesians 1:10), it's not just us, it's all of creation for all who believe. There will be a new heaven and new earth where all things are reconciled to God (Revelation 21:1). For believers who have been reconciled, we will spend eternity with God in the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21:3-4). The language of reconciliation is not just "God and you are good," but it's one day God and all of creation, including you, for all who believe, will be good (Ephesians 1:10), and that's so amazing. Notice it says, "According to His good pleasure" (Ephesians 1:9). This isn't God who's like, "Well, I made this, they messed up, but I guess I gotta be responsible for it." He's pleased to do this work (Ephesians 1:9). When He said, 'Let there be light,' Jesus knew where that was headed (Genesis 1:3). He's pleased to choose and adopt and lavish you with His grace (Ephesians 1:5-6). He's pleased that you are redeemed by His blood (Ephesians 1:7), and He's pleased to pour out the riches of His grace upon you (Ephesians 1:7-8). He's pleased (Ephesians 1:9).

You want to look this up in Scripture and dig in, read Luke 15. A woman loses a coin out of 10, and she goes and she searches and she finds it, and when she does, she rejoices with her neighbors. (Luke 15:8-9). In heaven, heaven rejoices when a sinner turns to the Lord (Luke 15:7, 10). A shepherd has a hundred sheep and he loses one, and he goes and finds it, and when he does, he

returns. And he tells the people, 'I found the sheep that I've lost,' and they rejoice (Luke 15:4-6). Heaven rejoices when one sinner turns (Luke 15:7). Then in Luke 15, the story of the prodigal son, the younger son, to his father says, 'I wish you were dead so I could have your money,' but 'I'll take it now and leave.' And he goes with that money and he squanders it. When he wakes up to how foolish he's been, when he repents and turns back to his father, when he's returning to his father, his father, while he's still a long distance away, races to him and gives him his cloak and his robe and his ring and sets up a feast because the son that was dead is alive (Luke 15:11-24). In the same way, our Heavenly Father takes good pleasure when we repent, when we turn (Luke 15:7, 10). He's not just doing this because He has to, He's pleased by it (Ephesians 1:9). That is so hard to believe, right? In our moments of sin, do you know the evil one? I know exactly where the dart hits me, and it's, "I'm not worthy." It's true that I'm not worthy in my own strength, but the evil one tries to get me to forget about the lavish grace (Ephesians 1:6), the fact that I'm chosen (Ephesians 1:4), the fact that I'm loved (Ephesians 1:4-5), the fact that I'm His child (Ephesians 1:5). I'm sure he does that to you too, but praise the Lord that God is pleased by what He does (Ephesians 1:9).

In him we have also received an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of **his will**, so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory. In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:11-14 CSB

This brings us to our last portion for today. ***"In him we have also received an inheritance because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will, so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory. In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until the redemption of the possession to the praise of his glory"*** (Ephesians 1:11-14).

To be a saint who stands ready for battle, you must believe....

- You have an inheritance by the will and plan of God
- You were sealed with the Holy Spirit in a lasting way
- Your hope is secure and your inheritance will come
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You've been chosen (Ephesians 1:4). By the way, I'm going to keep repeating this. You've been chosen (Ephesians 1:4). You've been adopted (Ephesians 1:5). You've been lavished with His grace (Ephesians 1:6). You've been redeemed by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7). He's richly poured out His grace upon you (Ephesians 1:7-8). He's reconciled you to Him according to His good

pleasure (Ephesians 1:9-10), and **You have an inheritance by the will and plan of God** (Ephesians 1:11). This is when we talk Revelation 22, when we talk about spending eternity with God (Revelation 22:3-5). God in heaven, remember when Jesus, with His disciples at the Last Supper, He says, 'If I go prepare a place for you, I will come back again.' And He says, 'In my Father's house are many, many rooms' (John 14:2-3). When we read about Revelation, we read about a place where the people of God will dwell with God for all eternity (Revelation 21:3). We won't be there as, like, the people pushing the brooms on the street. We'll be there as the children of God standing in His presence, rejoicing and working and living with Him and praising Him (Revelation 22:3-5). The inheritance we have is also, it is of Him, it is not of us (Ephesians 1:11). We're not the ones who define what we will get someday (Ephesians 1:11). He, by His purpose and plan, has given us an inheritance (Ephesians 1:11). When He made us children, He didn't make us lesser children. He made us children that would experience the full inheritance (Ephesians 1:11). We should marvel and rejoice in that.

If you wonder if it's true, well, that's why **We were sealed with the Holy Spirit** (Ephesians 1:13). We're sealed with the Holy Spirit in a lasting way (Ephesians 1:13-14). The language of "sealed," it's a fascinating word because I read different scholarship on it. Some people say, "Well, this is the seal, like how they brand an animal," and then others said, "No, no, no, this is the seal, like how they brand a legal document, you know, with, like, in the wax." As they argued through that, I don't know where I land on it because I'm not an ancient Greek in that day. In that day, I'd probably understand this pretty quickly, but in either case, what is abundantly clear is this is about ownership (Ephesians 1:13-14). You who were chosen by God, you who were adopted by God, **you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit in a way that says you are His for all eternity** (Ephesians 1:13-14). He doesn't put His seal on something and then say, 'Well, maybe not' (Ephesians 1:13-14). Again, we can make a lot of Bears jokes right now, but as I say that, God does not have buyer's remorse (Ephesians 1:13-14). God does not, from heaven, look and say, 'You know, for a while they were doing great' (Ephesians 1:13-14). No, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit in a lasting way (Ephesians 1:13-14). When you receive the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13), this again, John 10, I've referenced this so many times this summer, but it's one of the passages in Scripture that gives me the most joy: the Good Shepherd holds us in His hand, and if we are in the Father's hand, we can never be snatched away (John 10:28-29). If He has sealed you to Him through the Holy Spirit, there is nothing that will ever change that (Ephesians 1:13-14). Because of that, **our hope is secure, and our inheritance will come** (Ephesians 1:14).

The language here is there's a down payment (Ephesians 1:14). In our modern culture, when we think about a down payment, we think about, "Well, you pay the X percentage, and then you've

got the debt to come,” right? Like, no, no, no, no, no, that’s not what it’s saying here. It’s saying the down payment’s paid, you know He’s already got the rest covered (Ephesians 1:14). The language here is the language of you get to see right now a glimpse, the Already, but not yet of what will be.

We talked last week about Jesus. Before He died on the cross, He told His disciples, ‘I have overcome the world’ (John 16:33). The battle is already won (John 16:33). God already knows the end (Revelation 22:13). He knows for all who believe we will be with Him beyond it for all eternity (Revelation 21:3-4). We can hold to that promise because He makes it again and again in Scripture with His death and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). We know His words are true (John 17:17). When we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, we know that that which He has said from the beginning and before the beginning is true (Ephesians 1:13-14). He chose you (Ephesians 1:4). He adopted you (Ephesians 1:5). He lavished you with His grace (Ephesians 1:6). He redeemed you by the blood of His Son, by the blood of Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:7). He richly poured that grace out on you (Ephesians 1:7-8). He’s reconciled you (Ephesians 1:10). He’s given you an inheritance (Ephesians 1:11). He has sealed you with the Holy Spirit in a lasting way (Ephesians 1:13-14). **Your hope is secure, and your inheritance will come** (Ephesians 1:14).

To be a saint who stands ready for battle, you must believe....		
You were chosen for sainthood before creation	You have been redeemed of your sin by Christ’s blood	You have an inheritance by the will and plan of God
You are a child of God through the work of Jesus Christ	You have received the grace he richly poured out on you	You were sealed with the Holy Spirit in a lasting way
You have been lavished with the grace of God	You have been reconciled by God according to His good pleasure	Your hope is secure and your inheritance will come

Now, what I want to encourage you to do from this week, there’s a couple things.

First and foremost, whether it’s memorizing Ephesians 1:3-14, if you’re a memorizer, I’d encourage you to do that. If not, I’d encourage you, whenever you feel despair or just once a day, just read this passage for the next week. You’re not going to regret spending time in this passage. You’re going to read it and recognize how valued and loved you are.

Believers, when you’re struggling to stand tall, when you think, “I am not ready for the battle at hand in this world,” you were chosen for that battle (Ephesians 1:4), as a child of God (Ephesians

1:5), and God has given you everything you need (Ephesians 1:3). We are called to stand tall as [saints](#) ready for battle in this world against the forces of evil, the spiritual forces (Ephesians 6:12), and God has given us exactly what we need (Ephesians 6:13-17).

You know, when the Romans went to war, they went to war to make sure they didn't lose ground. Our hope of our inheritance for the future is secure (Ephesians 1:14). The kingdom of God does not lose ground because the forces of this earth cannot take from God what is God's (John 10:29). But what does matter is we're called to go out in this world (Matthew 28:19-20), and we are called to go out and point others to this truth, the truth of the gospel (Ephesians 1:13). What we have received, we're called to tell others about it (Matthew 28:19-20), that for those who God has chosen, they would come to know Him (Ephesians 1:4), that we would show them how to wear the armor, how to put their shields on, how to hold the sword (Ephesians 6:11, 17). We're called to do that together (Ephesians 4:16). So, you need to be praying this. You need to be thinking about this. You need to be believing this so you are ready to stand for the battle at hand.

There's one other thing I want to talk about. These are all "you," and in English, "you" can be singular or it can be plural. These could all just as easily be "y'all were chosen for sainthood." Believers, if you've ever watched any war movies, the greatest moments of strife in war movies—I love the TV show Band of Brothers. The times when you see their commander get really upset is when the men disrespect one another because he says, "If you are in a foxhole together, you're as good as the man on your left and on your right."

Believers, you need to not just see yourselves as [saints](#), chosen by God (Ephesians 1:4), adopted as children of God (Ephesians 1:5). You need to look at other believers and you need to see them in the same way. Because the war we are fighting in this world is not won if we are turning on one another (Ephesians 4:3-4). There is no room for friendly fire in the kingdom of God (Ephesians 4:31-32). As we go out for the battle at hand, what I want to encourage you in is that we are called, when your brother or sister in Christ is struggling, we are called to lift each other up (Ephesians 4:29), to remind each other (Ephesians 4:32). Don't just say to yourself, "I'm chosen." When a brother or sister in Christ is struggling, remind them that they are chosen (Ephesians 1:4). When a brother or sister in Christ is doing friendly fire, remind them, "Hey, that's not what that sword's for." We are called as believers to stand (Ephesians 6:13). It starts with me. It starts with you individually. But if we are doing this well, it should go out into how we treat one another. We should be united, standing side by side (Ephesians 4:3).

I just want to say this boldly. It feels like our nation might be on the way to revival. It might. I pray that it is. If our nation is on the way to revival, I am praying that our church is ready for people to come in. When they come in, I pray that they're ready and we can say, "Hey, here's how you hold

that. Hey, here's who you are, and here's who we are." If our nation is not headed to revival, if there's a pendulum swing far the other way, if we're headed towards persecution, do you know what we need to do? We need to be ready in the exact same way (Ephesians 6:13). The most sinful thing we could do, is to be apathetic in this time. We can't control what happens in this world, but whatever happens in this world, we can know we are chosen (Ephesians 1:4), we are children of God (Ephesians 1:5), and God has lavished His grace upon us (Ephesians 1:6). He has forgiven us (Ephesians 1:7). He has redeemed us by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7), richly pouring His grace upon us (Ephesians 1:7-8). He has reconciled us to Him (Ephesians 1:10). He has given us an inheritance (Ephesians 1:11). He has sealed us with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14), and He has given us a hope that is secure and an inheritance that will come (Ephesians 1:14).

Let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank You that You hear every word we say and that You knew it before You said, 'Let there be light' (Psalm 139:4; Genesis 1:3). Father, we thank You that we are chosen (Ephesians 1:4). We thank You that we are Your children (Ephesians 1:5). Lord, we thank You that You have lavished Your grace upon us (Ephesians 1:6). Lord, we pray that we would be a church that we would wear the armor of God with confidence (Ephesians 6:11), that we would speak and preach the gospel in such a way that we see many who are dead in their sins come to know You (Ephesians 2:1-5). I pray, Lord, if anyone here does not know You, as they hear this today, that Your Spirit would just open their eyes to the truth. I pray, Lord, that You have chosen them (Ephesians 1:4), and I pray You would bring them to that moment. Father, I pray for all of us, that we would walk forward in confidence (Ephesians 3:12). We would not be defined by the evil one or by the narratives of this world, but we would be defined by Your promises and what You have done (Ephesians 1:3-14). Father, I praise You for the testimony of Paul, who prayed for resilience to preach the gospel instead of freedom from chains (Ephesians 6:19-20). Father, we praise You for the example of Your Son, who willingly went to the cross, who willingly died in our place, and He rose and He reigns (Philippians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). We praise You that He will return someday, and when He does, we will see our inheritance in person (Revelation 22:12). We praise You, Lord, that we can trust Your promises (2 Corinthians 1:20). It is in the holy and precious name of Your Son, Jesus, we pray, amen.



Digging Deeper – **Chosen Saints** – Ephesians 1:1-14

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

2. Why is Paul an apostle?
3. The letter that we are looking at has a broad audience in mind, and Paul calls believers who read the letter “saints.” For you today, at this moment, not after you die, but as you read these words, if you are a follower of Christ, you are a saint because of what God has done. The question is, do you believe that you are a saint? Why or why not?

Read Ephesians 1:3-14

4. The verses you just read are all one long sentence in the Greek. For this sentence (verses 3-14), what are all of the actions that God has taken or will take? List each one.
5. How do we know the truth of what God has done and will do? What are the examples given in these verses?
6. How do you feel when you read that you are a saint that God has chosen from before the foundation of the world?
7. What are all of the things that we receive in these verses?
8. How do we know the truth of the promises of what we will receive?
9. As you read through verses 3-14, what is inside the scope of God’s will and plans? What is outside the scope of God’s will and plans?
10. How should we live in light of being chosen to be saints since before the world began? How should that change how we walk together in this world?
11. Take some time to end in prayer by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.
 - a. Pray for our body of believers
 - b. Pray for revival
 - c. Pray for our nation
 - d. Pray for our world
 - e. Pray for those you are in immediate contact with
 - f. Pray that we would truly be salt and light
 - g. Pray that the Lord would be using us to carry the Gospel to those in darkness