

Series: Healthy Church

Saints and Sinners

Sunday January 7, 2018

TEXT: Ephesians 1:1-14

TEACHING

1. How would you feel if you'd been thrown into prison unjustly?

What would you do?

2. God has a history of using evil intentions for good purposes, doesn't He?
(Gen. 50:20; Ro. 8:28).

3. *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ... (vv. 1-2).*

4. We can't do anything to earn our salvation. We're only saved – by the will of God.

5. *Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

6. *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ (v. 3).*

7. *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight (v. 4).*

8. *In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will (v. 5).*

9. "Predestination is about 'God's Big Fat Greek Wedding' – he (God) controversially (to Jews) opened up his gospel message to a new bride, the Greeks. It was never intended to be about individual selection of some for heaven while leaving others for hell" (*God Without Religion*, Andrew Farley, p. 108).

10. *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding (vv. 7-8).*

11. Spiritual blessings we have in Christ:

a. *Redemption*

b. *Forgiveness*

c. *Adoption*

12. *And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ (vv. 9-10).*

13. *In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory (vv. 11-14).*

TAKEAWAYS

1. How has God turned something good out of something bad for you? Would you take some time to dwell in that memory and thank Him? What harm are you enduring right now? Would you be willing to ask God to help you through it and somehow redeem it?
2. How do you see and think and talk about yourself? Would God agree?
3. Which of the spiritual blessings in Christ mentioned in this passage moved you most (if not all of them): redemption, forgiveness, or adoption? What do you want to say to God about them?