

# Ephesians (Quality: Good)

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[ 0 : 00 ]     that I am hoping to be helped to make a few remarks upon this evening will be found in the epistle to the Ephesians.

The first chapter, the eleventh verse. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Ephesians 1, verse 11. The children of God, whatever they may be regarded as by others around them in this world, are still the most favoured people on earth.

But the blessings that they receive through being called by grace, predestinated to this through divine election, are not to be lightly esteemed, and yet the provisions of God for them are but just small foretastes here, little sips of God's mercy, little tastes of his peace, little earnest sometimes of the rest that remain.

there awaits such a fullness of God's favour which he has laid out for his children that it is beyond all human power or intellect to penetrate or even as the word has it, to conceive what God has prepared for them that love him.

[ 2 : 21 ]     And as all this stems from the truth and the fact that they love him because he first loved them, how everything returns by way of divine gifts to God himself.

I cannot find more suitable words to express to express my feelings at the moment than the words which we of each, I believe, so often sung and frequently quoted.

As the benefit is ours, be all the glory thine. And what a mercy it will be to share in rendering glory to God forever and ever.

this is a brief introduction to a wonderful gift, a most marvellous preparation, an inheritance in store and made assured because if we are his, our head and glorious representative is already in charge.

He has entered into this and virtually we entered with it. He is set before us as the head of the church and we his body.

[ 3 : 55 ]     So, my friends, here is a wonderful assurance that while our hopes and our belief remain firmly established in the person and work merits of the Lord Jesus, our perseverance is sure and our attainment to that which is set before us in this verse is equally certain.

But let us not take license from this. Indeed, if we are kept tender in the fear of God, we shall not seek to do so. We shall remember a word in this same epistle, perhaps, and ask to be enabled to walk circumspectly, redeeming the time because the days are evil.

They are dangerous days in which we live. The more we are aware of this, the more I believe we shall seek for God's protection. Did you notice as we read, who this inheritance is said before by the Apostle Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is for you who are kept by the power of God.

One of the important things as far as their experience goes in this matter is to be made aware of their need of keeping. the danger comes and will increase as we feel that we no longer need it.

There is a word which I try to remind myself and my people of fairly frequently. Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

[ 5 : 55 ] Danger is it lies in feeling I'm secure now. Safety is in being aware that we are at if left for a moment to fall solemnly.

Then I believe we shall say Lord keep me by thy power. And perhaps you won't wonder now that my prayer included a petition to be prepared for this inheritance.

They are not unprepared who enter into this inheritance. They are made ready. They are made meet.

You must excuse me if I often come when I do come with a similar trend in my ministry. I should continue to press upon those who listen to me that salvation is of the Lord from first to last.

God's work it is and we should be in for so. The word came in so suddenly as it has done so many times before giving thanks unto the Father which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in life.

[ 7 : 25 ] Now do you see why I regard with so much importance the preparation of the Holy Spirit to enter in. And this is essential.

This is another point that I try to emphasize. it is to receive that blessed invitation which will cause a poor unworthy sinner who knows he's not fit to enter in because graciously invited.

Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you. You know the rest don't you? And I believe some of you have prayed many times that you might be prepared to enter in.

Well I'd like to put a question mark behind these first two words in whom? Well I believe I can say this every blessing that you and I have ever had temporal and spiritual have come to us as the hymn writer has it through Jesus' blood.

He's the purchaser of the favors we enjoy. He's that beneficent giver. The fullness is in him. It's in him for him to bestow, to provide, to dispense.

[ 8 : 58 ] We, the undeserving, the unworthy, but favored recipients of his mercy, of his grace, of every needy good in life, if we are found seeking to follow him and seeking to walk in a way honoring to the Father.

The Lord help us, we need it. This is who it is then and I'd rather have the word of God to confirm this as well as the hymn that I quoted.

And we have it in this epistle because it says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, margin things, in Christ.

Christ. So you see my friends, there is a flowing from this blessed source, the Lord Jesus, of all that is needful for the salvation of a lost sinner, lost previously that is.

How complete, how wonderful, how free is the salvation wrought out by the Son of God and how rich, and I may use the word, it's in the word, how rich is the prize that awaits his children at the end of the race.

[ 10 : 35 ] Let us seek grace to run with patience the race set before us, then looking unto Jesus that we may attain to this glorious prize in whom also we have obtained an inheritance.

Do you feel now it's time to go to prayer? Or can you readily accept this we have? Do you want it confirmed again?

Some of us do, very frequently. Why? not because we have any doubt in the work of God, but there's so much in us which militates against that which we know we ought to be, that we still wonder at times, does it include us?

Does it? Well, my friends, this is hopeful and encouraging if it causes you enough concern to betake yourselves to the throne of grace and say, Lord, confirm yet once more that the work within me is thy work, then I shall feel more relieved and I believe my doubts and fears will subside for a time.

The doubts and fears are no proof of grace, and yet I feel persuaded that they will occur if we are kept aware of our tendencies to fall short and know something of our shortcomings and are ready and willing to confess them.

[ 12 : 21 ] if we have obtained this inheritance we carry within us certain evidences of being prepared for it and some of the preparation is both a long way from being comfortable to our natures and we shall learn as we journey on that there is one particular gift from God that we greatly need so often it can be summed up in the word submission complete resignation to the mind and will of God in his dealings with us is not easily attained to in fact it is the result of the gift of God himself if we are ever brought to fall under his hand and into his will but it's great mercy to receive this once or twice in life I haven't come across many people in my little life here who have been able to really sincerely quote this sweet to lie passive in his hands and know no will but his but I know one or two and how it draws out your heart to such a one you can see how close they're getting to their

Lord and Saviour when this occurs but as I still say I'm only trying to bring before you the absolute necessity of preparation and then this confirmation the apostle was a gifted servant of God a divinely taught man the lessons he learned were learned in the hard way but he learned them well so he discovered you see that grace made him what he was and grace was preparing him through the operation and continued work and application of the Holy Spirit he was being led along toward the prize that awaited and yet you see he was compelled or constrained to say not as though I had already attained either were already perfect he was one of those still pressing forward still seeking to attain and may you and I view this is a very essential thing that we remain seeking earnestly seeking that we may lay hold of and attain to in due course in whom also we have obtained an inheritance

I sometimes feel when I reveal my own failings and shortcomings and the things that I am still unwillingly guilty of what a long way I must still be from anything like preparation reaching that stage of being ready yet you see we must come to this finally while we shall never under the influence of grace feel worthy to enter this inheritance there is a most encouraging word in the gospel of Luke and they were the words of Jesus that ye may be accounted worthy I cleave to this because one goes to God so often and can get no further sometimes than this thou knowest all things and then you think of

Peter oppressed as he was and guilty as he felt no doubt he still said thou knowest that I love thee and that's the secret there is something inside that you have no control of it controls you what a mercy it is that work that's going on it's all for his God it cannot fail we do fail and do so often that that work is in the hands of God you ought to be more thankful haven't we that this is the case oh to fear that the Lord is with us in the way we take this will encourage you to press forward because we're still in this wilderness we must come back to this on every occasion in spite of this bright prospect which lies ahead and we know but very little of it but the little that we do know it does spurn us on sometimes doesn't it when faith is given to see the wonders that God has prepared for his people

I wish I could quote that word it's in the psalm 31 I believe oh how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee and so on you see the psalmist must have had a faith view of some of the glory of it enough to cause him to see that the promised land by comparison was transient tailing and coming to an end as he viewed that real promised land which is endless laid up for those poor unworthy children of Israel such as we find ourselves to be sometimes but it is for Israelites it is for those who follow their leader it is for those who know that this world is a wilderness that it is not a rest those who are heading I believe toward this inheritance and will presently by the mercy of God enter into it are aware that here have we no continuing city don't desire to regard it as a continuing city because through

[ 18 : 59 ] God's mercy we are seeking one to come but I must try to pass on it's a profound subject much too high and too deep for me but may the Lord lead me a little into the next clause of it being predestinated I'm told and I cannot argue with it because there are gracious people who have stated this that there is a slight difference between election and predestination election is choice predestination is a providing for and a certainty of receiving because we are predestined to receive blessings because elected or chosen to receive them well however that is I do believe this that the predestination is the result of God's plan of salvation wrought out by the three one

God each of them having their part in this sacred matter and thus the choice though of three is but the choice of one one God and as to predestination I'm sure they are one in this God the Father has provided the blessings the Son has had to purchase them very dearly and then having rendered full satisfaction and complete obedience to his Holy Father he receives this which we have in the word it is pleased the Father that in him the Lord Jesus should all fullness dwell all power is given unto me he says in heaven and in earth now here it is that these blessings flow to his people they being predestined to receive them appointed they are to receive these didn't I read in Peter just now concerning the disobedience where unto they were appointed and this takes me to the word in the

Thessalonians for God hath not appointed us to rock but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ you see there is a difference in the appointment predestined to obtain salvation and all the benefits and blessings of it everything we need in or to accomplish salvation in us rests in Christ it's his to bestow but the mercy is that by eternal counsel there are those chosen and therefore predestined to receive these blessings I can but leave it to you now my friends to ponder on what you have received from the fullness of Christ you must have received something something very needful something very blessed something so free you must have done if you're on the way to this inheritance and I hope you are because I hope I am but what a wonderful thing to be predestinated by God you see the gifts and callings of God as we read in Romans are without repentance he never goes back on his word hath he said shall he not do it hath he spoken shall he not make it good he certainly will but what a wonderful thing to feel that the whole plan of salvation is in complete accord with the mind and will of

God himself it isn't always or perhaps often that the favoured children of God can really feel that God the Father has love and compassion and good intentions toward them it seems easier to our nature somehow not because we're still in under nature's power but we're still in the flesh we're still under the power of nature to a great extent and therefore things are put in a way that we feel that the Lord Jesus Christ is more approachable you feel you may go to him and yet you see the Lord himself the saviour himself rather corrected us in this and I know I've been corrected by him in this way for I dreaded God the Father for a very long time in my life it would be true to say that I was afraid of him while I felt a drawing to the saviour and I felt I could approach the saviour and I entreated to be kept reverent at all times toward the

Holy Spirit and I hope I always shall but I dreaded God the Father and I didn't feel that I dare approach him but I was set at liberty by the Lord's own words the Father himself loveth you it seemed incomprehensible to me but I did try to seek for grace and faith to receive this precious truth and I must say I was delivered from that snare that temptation from that time I now feel that I may approach him because I have a head and representative and a blessed shorty so you regard God the Father as much concerned in salvation as the other two divine persons in the Trinity I believe the plan of salvation was his devising the result of his divine wisdom and certainly of his love and therefore we are in this wonderful case of being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will when you consider that the will of

[ 25 : 47 ] God should be that there should be chosen out of humanity a number of people with no more desert than any other yet designed and predestinated because chosen to receive the favour of God it won't fill you with pride it won't give you self-exaltation it will humiliate you as often as this is made clear to you that the Father himself loveth you and the Son's love was so great that he laid down his sacred life to save a poor sinner like you know you are feel you are well I believe that just lately my ministry has been of the type which has emphasized and enforced the necessity that poor sinners must know what it is to be humbled it wasn't so long ago that

I had this subject it is not the will of your father that one of these little ones should perish not one and the whole trend of that chapter and the Saviour's teachings show that essential it is to become a little child yet you see there is this purpose of God established already as though it is a completed thing our part to be led along divinely instructed graciously prepared suitably humbled to receive the free gifts of salvation thankfully appreciatively wondering all the while that they should come to such as us is this how you go along sometimes wondering at God's long suffering wondering that you should receive his favour wondering that there should be times when feeling your shortcomings the sins also your favour with access at the throne of grace and enjoy relief while you pour out your heart before God what is this but free mercy and God's favour shown because it's his will to do so

I may have been a bit ponderous in coming to this but I had this in mind I want to emphasise that when God shows favour to any poor sinner it's in strict accordance with his own mind and will that is why they receive mercy God's purposes are brought to pass and when we speak of the counsel of his own will how divine is his counsel how inflexible and unopposable his will by anyone or anything we stand on a sure foundation when we rest on the mind and will and purposes of God they'll be carried out I have a word I must turn to it I don't want to quote or rather misquote I want to be quite sure that what I say concerning God is accurate so I have this word in Isaiah my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure yea I have spoken it

I will also bring it to pass I have purposed it I will also do it my friends there is the source of the sinner's safety in the matter of salvation it's God's will you may find this difficult to apprehend difficult to believe but it's the truth and therein has God revealed this mysterious yet most wonderful plan of salvation I admit I know but little of it but I wouldn't exchange the little that I know for anything that earth can afford everything of earth all earthly things will presently perish come suddenly to an end but that little that God does in the heart of a poor sinner will stand stand through all tests all trials all difficulties all opposition why because God has willed that that poor sinner shall be with him in glory forever is this the gospel you believe in is this the religion that

God has blessed you with how favored you are what wonders he has done for you called you out of darkness into his marvelous light I heard the late pastor here on one occasion give a most moving address on that particular word I read in Peter ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light I've never forgotten it it's obvious isn't it and I realize now what the purpose of all this wonderful plan of salvation and God's counsel really is intended for people I believe have got some wonderful ideas about why God appointed salvation salvation the answer is relatively very simple this people have I formed for myself what are they to do they shall show forth my praise where is it ah my friends I have to ask myself this question so often where is it

[ 32 : 44 ] I have been assured by gracious servants of his at different times that there is such a thing as resting behind the words of the hymn writer using it as a kind of excuse for our lethargy coldness or at least or at most rather half heartedness when I see thee as thou art I'll praise thee as I ought I hope we shall but it's been pointed out on several occasions that it's a mistake to leave it till then how do you feel about these things can you take this word which I offer to you quite affectionately do you feel that we should leave it till then or do you feel that his mercies are so great now that they should receive daily thanksgiving as we enjoy daily mercies and try to praise him for the hope that we have he's our

God in that special way our savior I feel that the whole preparation by the spirit in the hearts of God's children in this life is intended to be for the glory of God before I expect and I'm about as help to say it again whoso offereth praise glorifieth me I try to ponder over some of these scriptures offereth praise and this glorifies God how condescending is God then when a poor weak helpless sinner offers praise to God here and there in life means it is quite sincere in this is willing and it's a great mercy to be willing to lay one's heart open to the inspection of God thou knowest that

I desire to bless thy name and that I would if I could you may say that's a poor sort of offering heart what do we read about God he doesn't look on the outward appearance as man does he looks at the heart and there are times just a few times when I've been so thankful that he could see right inside do you know anything about this oh how sweet it is to feel all of a sudden his mercy flowing a kind of spirit of adoption comes over you and you feel you may draw near and offer thanksgiving to him you'll never be satisfied at least I hope you won't with your poor offerings here but look at the word again when you feel a little downcast at your short comings look at the word again whoso offereth praise glorifieth me where do you come to

I shall have to answer the question myself where do I come to this thou who knowest all things whose eyes are in every place beholding the evil and the good thou knowest that I have offered praise to thee more than once and I hope to obey you can you come in this can you come in with this have you received mercy have you had hope of forgiveness of sins have you pleaded to be cleansed knowing that nothing unclean can ever enter heaven I'm finding as I journey on how essential it is that we should have one more blessing to accompany forgiveness I used to think that's all I needed sure it's a great blessing and a very essential gift of

God but you see sin taints we need cleansing I find the word in the first epistle of John first chapter more instructive than ever the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin I see the need of it I pray to receive it may this be so in those last moments that there's an application of this my friends for I believe we should feel the effects of sin to the very last if we remain conscious it was a very valued servant of God I won't name him who is reported to have said I pass out of this life with the publican's prayer in my heart to God I should die satisfied because that little plea contains all that a poor sinner will ever need

[ 38 : 18 ] God's mercy so you see it revealed in the gift of his son his loving mercy and you see it in his spirit's work preparation of a poor sinner to inherit the kingdom prepared for him or her well what do we need now grace to endure perseverance there's a devil still in this land and he sometimes in their hearts by his power either saying that well you come along safely so far might just as well take things a little easier now the Lord won't let you down if you are his and if you're not well what does it matter does he put things like this to you oh how crafty is what a subtle foe is

Satan be on your guard my friend read the epistle of Peter again the first one and he'll warn you to be sober and vigilant because of your adversary the devil if he could stop one of God's little children from finally attaining to this inheritance he'd be delighted and you may say but you told us just now we're under the care of God I told you also not to become careless about this didn't I not to take license from it not to think you can live smoothly and enjoy yourself because of the love of God oh my friends it isn't necessary to be miserable either no this is no sign of grace but what we cannot do is enter into the so called joys of the world link rather would we enter into those joys which are the result of receiving

God's favour there are joys you know that one sings of which earth cannot afford they comprise these sweet foretastes of the rest that remaineth and they are sort of earnest of their entitlement to the inheritance which is laid up for those who fear God whom also we have obtained an inheritance because it is stated in the scripture whether the forerunner hath for us entered the very important and most encouraging truth hath for us entered taken possession of it who knows better than God 3-1 Father Son and Holy Spirit whom he has chosen whom he has predestinated to inherit this wonderful inheritance and be found serving him lovingly and willingly and faithfully without sin through all eternity when the work of grace is completed in each of us who knows better than they who they are what you will still need if you are like me is just another token just another sweet word applied with power from the

Holy Spirit fear not fear not for I have redeemed thee I have called thee by thy name thou art mine amen number 471 which is bent 34 prepare thee gracious God to stand before thy face thy spirit must work before it is all friends 471 me thee

My spirit does the walk of home, for he is all of grace.

[ 43 : 38 ] In bright a beautiful glow, and watch me in his heart.  
Soon shall I hear my hand with joy, upon the stars of God.  
Through thou my sins are new.  
And so great love may turn.  
The spirit of my life bring you.

[ 45 : 14 ] And save me in thy song.  
Let me attach thy heart.  
Let me thy goodness prove.  
Till my soul can hold your heart.  
For he is the lost in love.

[ 46 : 23 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Oh, gracious God, will thou accept the petition in the hymn just sung?  
Thou knowest how many of our hearts have gone with that which has been sung. How much we need it. Of how we prize, would further prize, every evidence of thy work within.  
We thank thee if thou hast begun it, because we know thou wilt maintain and complete it. Our hope is in thee. Thou knowest this.

Forgive all that have been sung. Forgive all that have seen and heard amiss, we pray, to do bless thy word to thy people, that they may respond with praise and thanksgiving to thee, the giver of the word.

We would be thankful for mercy extended once more in thy house. And as we separate, we ask to be taken into thy kind care and keeping.

[ 47 : 44 ] May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us each and with all thine.

Amen.