

Monstrosity of praise

Pray

Introduction

Welcome again to our second sermon on Ephesians, which forms a part of our Lock down sermons. Lockup but unbound.

God in His providence has emptied the streets, but now some people are trickling back.

The church doors are closed but not God's word.

Paul said while bound in chains, the word of God is not bound. 2Tim 2:8-10.

The **gospel may not be preached** from the pulpits of churches, but it's being preached now more than ever from **the pulpits of social media than** ever before in history.

You might be feeling **frustrated, disconnected, locked** up, in anguish, hearts in turmoil, missing the face to face fellowship. I know at times I feel this way.

Know this: **God is not frustrated, He is not in anguish**, He knows exactly what He is doing and He is in absolute control.

How should you and I respond to this new way of living.

Our passage this morning calls you to worship God.

It's a passage that shapes your identity, it reminds you of the amazing eternal benefits you have as a believer in Jesus.

These coming weeks, you can imagine sitting at the feet of God the Father, His son and the HS listening to the abundant blessings available for you in Christ.

So that you walk in this time praising God.

Historical Background/ structure

Paul was in prison in Rome, in the latter part of his two-year captivity as recorded in Acts 28:30

He wrote sometime time between 60-62AD

He wrote to inform, strengthen and encourage believers, assuring them of their place in Gods ultimate divine plan to unite (summing up, subjection) all things, in heaven and earth in Christ. Eph 1:10

God's plan to bring about this cosmic harmony in the spiritual and earthly realms is through the gospel (Christ death and resurrection) by:

1. having defeated Satan and his evil forces on the cross. Eph 1:20-22
2. providing salvation for His elect Eph 2:4-6
3. reconciling Jew and Gentile to God in one body through the cross Eph 2:16

Paul wants to ground the believers in faith and ultimately help them to form their identity and self-worth in Christ.

He writes to believers in Ephesus and the surrounding churches in western Asia Minor

Some background to our passage

Eph 1:3-14 is one sentence in the Greek. A scholar called this

“the most monstrous sentence conglomeration ... that he has ever found in the Greek language! (Hoehner)

It has 202 words in the Greek, 11 sentences in the ESV, bursting forth praise to God

The author used this monster of a sentence to describe the riches and blessings that God has blessed the believer with.

The sheer size emphasises not only the greatness of these blessings, but also the vastness of its scope.

Some scholars call it a disguised hymn broken up into three sections.

- Section 1 being vs 3-6 focuses on the blessings from God the Father's blessings for the believer ending in praise for His Glory and Grace in vs 6
- Section 2 vs 7-12 focuses on the blessings from Jesus Christ for the believer ending in praise of His Glory vs 12
- Section 3 vs 13-14 focuses on the blessings from the Holy Spirit Christ for the believer ending in praise of His Glory vs 14

For the next 3 weeks I plan to preach through this one sentence, mining some of its glorious God exalting truths in this monstrous sentence of praise.

Passage Eph 1:3-14

focusing on vs 3-6

Propositional statement

3 Reasons why you should praise God despite being cooped up at home

1. Because He is your Dad
2. Because He Blessed you
3. Because He chose you

› 1st Reasons why you should praise God despite being cooped up at home

1. Because He is your Dad

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, **Ephesians 1:3 ESV**

Blessed be (praise)

The term means to be worthy of praise, or praised.

It's a term calling you to worship.

God is to be worshipped because of who He is and what He did.

Paul's main point is to call you to praise God because of **who He is**.

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

Knowing who He is provides the reason to worship Him.

Who is He?

1stly He is God.

He is:

- one God, in three persons, the triune God,
- the creator and He sustains of the universe,
- He does not seek to prove Himself,
- He exists, He is spirit, He is truth,
- He is all powerful,
 - all knowing, all present, eternal, infinite, Holy, Just, loving and much more as discovered in the Scriptures

Praise Him because He is God.

He is also **our Father, He relates** in family relationships

Key truths we should know about God:

Our

1. He is the Father of "**our**" Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Our includes:
 - I. Jesus
 - II. **Paul**
 - III. The believers in Asia Minor
 - IV. The believers through all time

If you trusted Jesus as Saviour and Lord, you may call Him Our Father.

God is a relational God

God is a family God; He is your Dad.

If you think about how children sometimes speak about their Fathers.

They love to compare Fathers. You will hear things like:

My dad can run very fast and can even jump down ten steps

My dad he has a big car and My dad makes the best chocolate cake

My dad is so smart that they have made him the boss of his business

Well imagine this:

My Dad is so powerful, He created the universe by speaking it into reality

My Dad loved me so much that He sent His only Son to die for me

My Dad can be everywhere and my Dad even know my thoughts,

My Dad knows everything there is to know in this universe and more.

You can see how easy it is to praise God the Father if indeed He is your Father, your Dad.

The Next phrase relates God the Father to Jesus Christ

Of our Lord Jesus Christ

Implies 3 other truths:

1. Jesus is **Lord** implies He is the one in authority, He is Master
2. Jesus means **God** is Saviour. Saviour of who, you, which means God loved you so much that He even incorporated you into His name.
3. The title **Christ** which means He is the promised Messiah, who would bring salvation.

Why praise Him?

Because your Dad is God the Father of your Lord ,Saviour, and Messiah

Application

1. When last have you simply praised Him for being your Father.
2. When last have you thought about this truth” My Heavenly Dad, my heavenly Father is also the Father of Jesus
3. Jesus is your Lord, He controls everything, He is your saviour.

4. You may be worried and concerned as you face stressful circumstances, but despite everything, praise Him why, Because He is your Spiritual Dad, He is in control.

› 2nd Reasons why you should praise God despite being cooped up at home

2. Because He Blessed you

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, **Ephesians 1:3 ESV***

who has blessed us (why you praise Him)?

Why should you praise God? Because He blessed us.

Blessed you Gk term is where we get the term eulogy from= spoken well of you, means he has acted towards you

Towards God: means you praise Him; you speak well of Him.

But towards you, God blessing you means:

1. He has bestowed **his favour** upon you (BDAG),
2. He has **acted for your good** not what you desire, but what you need. He blessed you by intervening. (**The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament**)

*God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.” **Acts 3:26 ESV***

in Christ (Sphere)

This is repeated 11 times emphasising what God has done for His people, in Christ.

The sphere, the domain, the space in which God blesses you is, in Jesus, united with Christ.

If you have trusted in Christ's death and resurrection for the forgiveness of your sins, then you are spiritually joined to the body of Christ.

You are in the realm, the place to experience God's infinitely great spiritual blessings

What is the content of those blessing? The next phrase explains the content

with every spiritual blessing

This statement tells us 2 things:

1. The nature of the blessings
2. The quantity or variety of the blessings

Nature

- **spiritual**, pertaining to the things of the Spirit of God,
- It bound up and appropriated through **participating with the indwelling** Holy Spirit.
- its **supernatural**,
- Its source = **God the Holy Spirit**.
- It consists of **Gods saving activities** in Christ which Paul describes in the rest of this sentence vs 3-14 and in this book. (Word Biblical Commentary)

The **quantity /variety** is described as **every or all**,

The grammar implies that it refers **to every kind of blessing**, as specified in vs 4-14 (Hoehner, H. W.). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*)

in the heavenly places, (where/location)

This tells us the **sphere** of the blessings.

It represents **introduces a cosmological** sphere, by analogy the **spiritual world above, the heavenly realms**.

This realm is populated with:

- **God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit and His holy angels** Eph 1:20
- **rulers' authorities and powers** Eph 3:10
- **cosmic powers and spiritual forces of evil** Eph 6:12

So, we see that:

Heaven is still involved in this present evil age.

The blessings you received in Christ have direct links with the **spiritual heavenly realm.**

Eph 2:6

There still remains hostile evil powers in heaven until the completion of this age.

But Jesus defeated them in the Gospel (when He died and rose again) Eph 1:21-22

Application

1. You may feel like you're in prison in Lock down, but you can praise Him because He has blessed you.

1. He has blessed you:

- a. not **with worldly things**, but **things that impact you** in this world
- b. not with **worldly success**, but **things that give you Gods perspective of success**
- c. with **the blessings**, the **result of God saving you.**

i. These would include things like:

- He chose you
- He has given you a destiny
- He redeemed you
- He made His great cosmic, universal plans known to you
- He has given you an inheritance
- He has sealed you

2. No lock down, isolation or recession in this world can remove these heavenly spiritual blessings for you if you are a believer in Christ, so respond in praising Him

› 3rd Reasons why you should praise God despite being cooped up at home

3. Because He chose you

even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which

he has blessed us in the Beloved. **Ephesians 1:4–6 ESV**

even

The reason or the basis for God blessing you comes from the fact that God chose you. God selection of you led to God blessing you.

He chose us

The term chose means to single out, to pick out, to select.

It is like you pour out a box of smarties, and you simply make a decision to select some for a purpose.

The grammar emphasises that it is God was the one doing the choosing himself.

It also reveals He has great interest in the people He chose

Notice Gods choice:

- was not based on whether he likes you or dislikes you.
- did not imply that He chose to send some to hell, this passage makes no mention of that.
- was not based on whether a person was holy, or had some legal claim for it.

On the contrary Scripture teaches that man is conceived in sin, and is a sinner by nature condemned (Rom 5:12-19, Ps 51:4-5)

How did God choose the believers?

in him (Instrument/How)

The Bible tells us that the means or the instrument involved in selecting people was Christ.

This does not mean that God chose you through faith in Christ.

It means Christ was present and involved in the selection of the believer, for the purpose of Gods glory, knowing that it would require His own death and resurrection on the cross to accomplish that.

Just ponder that for a moment: Jesus was involved in selecting you for His glory.

Your creator Jesus, chose you and brought you into being and saved you for His glory.

before the foundation of the world (When/Timing)

The Term **foundation** Gk= laying down something, **providing a base for something** (BDAG), **throwing down, like throwing down seed**

So, what is referred to is the **starting point of a building.**

But in this case, it's the **starting point of the world, the foundations of the world.**

The term **world is a term cosmos**, which refers to this **world or this universe.**

The sum **total of everything** that exists in this universe.

Before **you were even conceived** God chose you:

Before **there was even a universe in existence**, God our **Father and Christ chose** you.

You believing is the **result of God's selection** and so your response should be to praise Him. The tools God used was a preacher and the gospel, but the original choice happened with god before this world was created.

The timing implies:

1. The **trinity existed** before creation.
2. You **had no role to play in your election**, you did not even exist.
3. You were **thought of in Gods mind before** creation
4. Gods **choice of you is not** because He **fore knew that you would choose to trust** in Him. The **Bible does not teach this.**

So why did He choose you?

*even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love **Ephesians 1:4***

ESV

A)1st Reason: He chose you is to be holy & blameless

that we should be holy and blameless (goal, why)

God had a goal in His choice of you.

This goal was to reflect **Gods Holy character.**

You and I are to reflect **the particular quality or ethical holiness**

*It's like a craftsman that picks up a specific rock grinds it into a handful of sand, super heats it to 1700 degrees , turning into liquid, that cools down into glass, which he then coats with a thin perfect coating of metal, ending up with a product reflecting back to him his own **face called a mirror.***

The grammar implies that **He chose you to be in an ongoing basis** to be **Holy and blameless reflecting Christ likeness**

He did not choose you **because you were Holy**, but **to become Holy** and to be that forever.

To be **holy means to be distinct, to be desperate form** sin. To be morally and ritually pure

God separated you and chose you from all mankind to be separate and distinct from sin.

To be blameless comes from the OT practice **of bringing animals without any** defects or blemishes to sacrifice at the Temple.

In the NT Christ offered an **unblemished sacrifice** before God.

*how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. **Hebrews 9:14 ESV***

Christ died to **present unblemished believers** before God.

*he has now **reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,***

Colossians 1:22 ESV

so that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:27 ESV

Blameless means unblemished, free from physical and moral defects, being spotless, without spot or blemish.

If we return to the illustration of a mirror, if you have a mirror that has lost some of its metal coating, that is a blemish on the mirror

Position-ally in Christ you are Holy and unblemished, but in practice you are not.

The path of sanctification brings it about that your standing before God progressively lines up with your state before God.

You become more and more like Christ over time, until you die, and finally achieve the goal of being holy and unblemished in standing and in state where?

You are the unblemished God designed mirror reflecting only His glory.

before him (association)

Gods goal in choosing you is that in the end of the day, after you have died, and when you're in His face to face presence, that you will be Holy and blameless.

You would then associate with God in a condition of God given holiness, God given righteousness, unblemished.

The grand event for every believer will be to enter into His presence Holy and blameless both position-ally and practically.

Both in standing and state

he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,

Colossians 1:22 ESV

With no more sinful nature, no more physical body contaminated by the fall

Christ like inwardly and outwardly

Glorified body and glorified soul

God's unveiled Holiness does not allow any sinful being into His presence.

So, what would you experience if you enter his presence?

In love (association)

In love tells describes the term "should be"

The goal of Gods choice is that you would enter his presence in Holiness and without blemish and connect with God in love

*and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13
ESV*

Gods aim is a sanctified Bride for Jesus, in a love relationship with Him.

In summary

God chose you to be holy and blameless, to come into His presence into a deep love relationship with God.

Application

1. Knowing this to be your destiny, you should seek to put of wicked thinking, wicked actions, wicked emotions in dependence upon Gods Spirit.
2. You can praise God for this goal, because the God of the bible is not like the idol Diana that was worshipped through ritual prostitution, and sacrifices or the idol Molech that required babies to be sacrificed to him. Gods aim in choosing Him is to be holy, and separate form sin. Praise Him for that

3. If you do not know Jesus as Saviour and Lord, then may I encourage you to respond to Him this morning.
4. Turn away from your sinful life and turn towards Jesus
5. Depend upon Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins and His holiness will be credited to your account.
6. Without Christ it's impossible to be Holy before God.

*What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; **Romans 3:9–10 ESV***

B)2nd reason He chose you for a destiny

he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, Ephesians 1:5 ESV

he predestined us

Predestined=to determine beforehand, means to decide beforehand, your destiny has been decided beforehand. (BEDAG)

The 2nd reason he chose you is that God has a destiny in mind for you.

The Grammar indicates a sequence of events:

- after God chose you, He predestined you
- He selected you and the next thing He did was to decide on about your future destiny.

Gods destiny for you is aimed at 3 things. He predestined you:

1. To adopt you
2. To bring Him joy
3. To elicit worship

Let's look at all three. things that are part of your destiny

1st God destined you

I. To be adopted as His son

for adoption to himself as sons (Goal)

Adoption means that a child is adopted as a son who was not so by birth.

Some will travel thousands of kilometres to adopt children.

After many months of preparing, eventually they meet the judge who legally declares the child to be a member of their family.

They went through great sacrifice, to finally obtain the child and the child into the family.

What we see here is God's future objective for you, is to be unveiled as His son or daughter and He being your Father.

and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:18 ESV

How does that make you feel?

Gods looks forward to meeting you as a Father, to wipe away every tear

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 21:3-4 ESV

let's look at the next part of the verse

to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, (how)

Through Jesus tells us:

1. God used Jesus; Jesus was the instrument making it possible for you the sinner to be adopted into God's Family

2. It also implies the great cost **Jesus paid to make this possible.**

Jesus's blood was **spilt on the cross to open the way for the sinner** to be adopted into Gods Family

You and I were:

- **spiritual orphans,**
- by nature, children of wrath Eph 2:3 ,
- sons of disobedience Eph 2:2,
- children of Satan.
- Our world is passing away and all that awaits is Hell Heb 10:27 **yet God has planned a different destiny for His chosen ones.**

God the Son merged **His divine nature with human nature called the incarnation,** **He walked the perfect life,** paid the price by dying on the cross for your sins, rose again so that you and I can in the future be welcomed as adopted sons into His heavenly presence.

*Justification is the **legal declaration that one is righteous with respect to the demands of God's law.** Adoption, however, is **the legal declaration by the divine Judge that the justified one has been made a member of the divine Judge's family.** (MacArthur, J., & Mayhue, R. (Eds.). (2017). *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (pp. 625–626))*

It cost Christ His life to pay the price to receive the adoption as sons.

*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. **Galatians 4:4–5 ESV***

To himself: The **initiative to adopt you came from God the Father,** and the **end goal is God the Father.**

All of creation awaits with great anticipation grand unveiling of the sons of God.

*For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. **Romans 8:19 ESV***

When it will finally happen, this wonderful event, the adoption takes place combined with you I **receiving your glorified body**. (like a coming home present)

Your adopted **and here is your new body**

*And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait **eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Romans 8:23 ESV***

Through Christ, you are destined to be adopted into God's family.

2ndly God destined you to joy

*he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, **according to the purpose of his will**, Ephesians 1:5 ESV*

II)To bring Him joy

according to the purpose of his will

The phrase "according to the purpose" is 2 GK words in the Greek.

- **according**
- **purpose:** which means **good pleasure, satisfaction, well pleasing**

Gods predestination was **not unpleasant but gave him great pleasure**. (Hoehner, H. W. (2002). Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary (pp. 198–199)

of His will

The Grammar implies that **His will produces the good pleasure**.

The **source of Gods good pleasure** comes from **the will of God**.

Gods eternal decrees, Gods eternal plans brings Him ultimately great pleasure, or great joy, great satisfaction.

In Gods Mind, He thinks **about that final meeting face to face** with you with great joy.

He is your Father, you His son, spotless because of what Jesus did, the realisation of eternal plans give God ecstatic joy.

A Destiny of Joy

Just as parents think about that day when finally, they can welcome the long-awaited adopted child into their home, legally as their child. IT will bring them great joy.

3rdly God destined you to bring praise to Him

to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:6 ESV

III) To elicit worship

to the praise (goal/why)

But the ultimate goal of your predestination by God is to produce praise and worship.

God is ultimate, and His plans and ways of doing things always results in praise and worship.

Gods goal is for all creation to express:

- admiration
- to express the greatness of God
- to worship Him

of his glorious (goal)

Grammatically this term functions as the object of praise

What we praise God for.

Gk is the term glorious = glory, reputation, reflecting the essence of Gods being.

The OT carried the idea of weightiness, (weighty in person), the idea of significance and importance that makes an impact on others.

In the NT meant it used to **reflect the essence of His being**, to **radiate His splendour**, and power.

It's a **reflection of His Divine essence**

Gods reputation comes **from who God is.**

What God planned and accomplished reflects upon God's being

It oozes **out of who God is.**

His glory solicits worship/praise

grace, (Produces the glory & praise)

But none of that would be true without His Grace.

The **gospel in one word**

Gods **unsolicited favour, unmerited favour**, God's goodwill and help.

You and I **deserved only His wrath**

But God in his love did not treat us in the way we deserved, but instead treated Christ in that way.

He killed His only Son your place, treated Him like a sinner, and showered his love upon you who believed in Jesus.

I want you to see the connection here:

His Grace (Christ death on the cross) displays His glory, that solicits praise and worship

with which he has blessed in the Beloved.

God' s object of Grace is the beloved,

They are:

- The ones chosen by God
- The ones predestined to adoption
- the ones that bring Him joy,

- the ones that ultimately culminate in worshipping and praising Him

Application

1. In this time period, remember this God has a destiny for you.
 - a. Your adoption awaits you
 - b. Great joy awaits you
 - c. responds to Him by praising Him.
2. Wont you as a Family, or even as a single person watching this this morning, thank God the Father for what He has done.
3. May I encourage you to remind yourselves of these great truths often in these times and may it lead to a worship response.
4. For those out there this morning, who know that their lives are not right with God, that you have been worshipping your own idols, turn away from that life and turn and depend upon Jesus death and resurrection.
5. So that you to may be a worshipper of Christ.
6. Maybe you're thinking, you're not one of the elect, may I encourage you this morning, that is not your job to worry about that.
7. God in His grace and sovereignty did that
8. But this same God is calling you to run to Him, to run to Christ to find your salvation at the foot of the cross.
9. I urge you to do so even today.

I conclude this message again today

3 Reasons why you should praise God despite being cooped up at home

1. Because He is your Dad, our Father

2. Because He Blessed you with every kind of spiritual blessing pertaining to what Christ accomplished for you in salvation
3. Because He chose you
 - a. To be holy and blameless and Spotless)
 - b. for a destiny
 - i. being adopted
 - ii. to bring Him joy
 - iii. to worship Him