

Ephesians 1:3-6 - Chosen Beforehand by the Father

Intro – The Bible is the amazing *Book of Truth*, it tells us things we would never know otherwise. It tells us about: Creation...Fall...this life...afterlife...eternity future...eternity past ^{before Creation}. Many of the truths the Bible unveils are not just enlightening but also polarizing. The truth in our text fits this category. Predestination has a bad reputation as being *hard / bad / mean / unfair*. Phrases like, “*making us robots*” or “*assaulting our free will*” often come out when combating it. Talking about predestination can be uncomfortable, yet ironically it is a very comforting truth. God’s choice of us is exhilarating and liberating and is presented to us in scripture as a blessing. Psalm 65:4 “*How blessed is the one who You choose and bring near to You to dwell in Your courts...*” If the truth of God’s choice of a people is troubling to you, then I hope to ease that angst & help shift your thinking. God’s choice in predestination is nothing less than a great blessing (Eph. 1:3-4). It is the blessing of adoption...being adopted by a loving Father who chooses to love someone who is not His own and guarantees that that person will forever be a part of the His family.

PREDESTINATION IS A PROMINENT TRUTH

1. Predestination is not an isolated topic or a small subject in scripture.
 - a. A major Biblical theme is God choosing a people for Himself, loving them, redeeming them, and eternally saving them as a testimony to His grace & mercy.
 - i. Noah and not the world. Abram and not his family
 - ii. Isaac not Ishmael Jacob not Esau Israel not other nations
 - iii. The Church not the world. Sheep not the goats Believers not unbelievers
2. There are over 100 specific references to God electing, choosing or predestinating people
 - a. Almost every NT book mentions this truth (23 out of 27???) big topic
 - b. It is not a question whether the Bible teaches predestination & election, but rather do we believe what the Bible teaches about predestination & election.

PREDESTINATION IS A HUMBLING TRUTH

- No other truth brings man so low and exalts God so high as the truth of predestination
 - *Predestination* = a destination that is decided beforehand.
 - man’s eternal destination is decided
 - Prideful man thinks that he is sovereign and the determiner of destiny
 - (Famous poem “Invictus”) “*It matters not how strait the gate, how charged with punishments the scroll, I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.*”
 - The Inspired Scroll says that God is the Potter, and we are the clay
- The timing of God’s choice is very humbling to man.
 - Eph. 1:4 - “*...before the foundation of the world...*”
 - 2 Thess. 2:13 “*...God chose you from the beginning for salvation...*”
 - 2 Tim. 1:9 Rev. 17:8 Matt. 25:34
 - Predestination happened before creation. None of us were there

- PREDESTINATION IS A PRICKLY BUT PRECIOUS TRUTH**

- God's decision in predestination is described as an adoption.
 - Eph. 1:5 (a blessed adoption – 1:3-5)
 - Adoption is a beautiful thing...
 - adults decide they want to bring a needy child into the family
 - they may choose a child out of an orphanage or an adoption agency
 - they may adopt a baby from an unwanted pregnancy...
- Love and kindness are the bookends of predestination and adoption.
 - Eph. 1:4c-5 *“in love He predestined....according to the kind intention of His will.”*
 - Deut. 7:6-8 Deut. 10:15
 - 1 Thess. 1:4 2 Thess. 2:13 1 John 3:1
 - Predestination is all about love & kindness shown to people who don't deserve it
 - Lost, abandoned and hopeless hellions being brought into the heavenly family.
 - Orphans of sin & Satan adopted & guaranteed a forever home with the Father.
 - Sinners predestined to adopted as sons
 - Predestination is a promise to love/redeem/embrace/keep for eternity
 - Predestination is a guaranteed & pre-arranged place in the home
- Who makes the decision in an adoption?
 - The adult decides to love and adopt. The child is the recipient of the loving action of the adult
 - In both birth & adoption the child is not the one making the choice of family.
 - None of us chooses the family we are born in or adopted into.
 - God chooses to make us His children by new birth & adoption...He pre-chooses
 - No one faults a parent for not adopting all the orphans.
 - Why blame God for graciously choosing some and not all?
 - He didn't save any fallen angels but has chosen to save many fallen men.
- What predestination is not
 - Predestination is not forcing people kicking and screaming into heaven while turning people away who want to be a part of the heavenly family
 - John 6:37 Matt. 11:25-28 – Election and an Open Invitation are not incompatible truths
- Can I know if I have been chosen? YES!
 - 2 Peter 1:10 Titus 1:1 Acts 13:48
 - In God's amazing predestination everyone gets exactly what they want
 - The unbeliever willing rebels/rejects. The believer willingly embraces Christ.
 - The believer eventually finds out that we love Him because He loved us first.
 - # 289 in blue hymnal *“My Lord, I did not choose You, for that could never be...”*