

## ***“The Will of God Through Jesus Christ”***

February 28<sup>th</sup> & March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013

### ***Ephesians 1:1-6***

Paul presents himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ *by the will of God*. In verse five he explains that God predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, *according to the purpose of His will*. Also, in verse nine he states that God is making us know *the mystery of His will*, and in verse eleven he mentions again that God works all things according to *the counsel of His will*. So in an expression of praise to God, Paul delivers a passage of scripture that has the will of God revealed to the saints that are in Ephesus and in the same way God is revealing His will to us, His Church. This is to expand on a profound mystery that contains the grace of God for salvation, predestination, adoption, spiritual blessings, and purpose – all through Jesus Christ.

#### ***“To the Saints”***

*Saints*: (Hagioi/Hagios) “referring to that which *has been set apart as sacred or dedicated to God*.”<sup>1</sup> Emphasis added

- ❖ This word not only describes the righteousness of a person’s behavior, it also refers to a status that comes from God, something that we received through redemption.

*“He chose us in Him...that we should be holy and blameless before Him...” Ephesians 1:4*

*1 Corinthians 1:30 “And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”*

- ❖ While the word designates a status, those who are spoken of as *hagios* are also commanded to continue in holiness.

*Hebrews 12:14 “...Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.”*

#### ***“Who are in Ephesus”***

- ❖ Ephesians is one of the letters that Paul writes from jail to a church that Paul loved. He had spent more than two years preaching in this place, not only ministering to the Ephesians but all the residents of Asia heard the Word of the Lord.
- ❖ This place was not only the gateway to Asia in regard to commerce and economy, but it was also a gateway to the cities of Asia for the ministry of the Gospel which Paul preached.
- ❖ The church in Ephesus was one of the strongest churches in the New Testament that Paul addresses in his writings.
- ❖ The church that was in Ephesus was in a place of abundance (the banking capital of Asia) and was in the most important place in Asia during the times of the apostle Paul. Some would say that only Rome and Alexandria in Egypt were bigger than Ephesus.

#### ***“And are faithful in Christ Jesus”***

- ❖ Ten times in the first 13 verses we find the phrase: *“in Christ Jesus”*

*“Our union with Christ is captured in that simple prepositional phrase, ‘in Christ,’ used by Paul in one form or another 164 times. Only as we are ‘in Christ’ are we chosen, called, regenerated, justified, sanctified, redeemed, assured of the resurrection, and given every spiritual blessing...”<sup>2</sup>*

#### ***Ephesians 2:18-22***

- ❖ How amazing it is to know that I am holy and faithful in Christ and as a Christian my identity develops and takes place in Christ.
- ❖ We find that the secret to living a godly and productive life is through the relationship that God has provided in Christ.

*John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."*

*f* From this vital union with Christ we draw our nourishment, our strength, our spiritual life and blessings.

- ❖ Whether the branches to its Vine, or a bride to her Groom, or a building to its Foundation, or the body to its Head – we are to relate to Him in everything.
- ❖ The first three chapters of this letter to the Ephesians are our doctrinal foundation, and in the last three chapters we find our practical walk. **We need to know who we in order to know how to act!**

### ***"Grace to you and peace from God"***

- ❖ It is important to receive the grace of God through Christ in order to have peace.

### ***"Every spiritual blessing"***

- ❖ *"Every spiritual blessing"* that is in this promise belongs to the believer in Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Although we are not entitled to anything from God, His will is to bless us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

*John 4:10 "Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink," you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.'"*

*f* Too often we as Christians settle for mediocrity for we are ignorant of His provision!

- ❖ As we go through the book of Ephesians we need to see the provision of the Lord for us and appropriate every blessing to our Christian walk.

### ***"As He choose us in Him before the foundation of the world"***

Choose: *"eklégomai ... properly, to select (choose) out of, by a highly deliberate choice ... with a definite outcome ..."*<sup>3</sup>

- ❖ At the moment of our conversion God transformed our life; but he had planned it before the foundation of the world.

*Deuteronomy 14:2 "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."*

*"In love He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ,..." Ephesians 1:4-5*

**The fact that God accepted me in Christ, "the Beloved,"  
is meant to provide confidence, gratitude, love and praise to His Glory!**

***To the praise of His glorious grace!***

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Barry, J. D., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Mangum, D., & Whitehead, M. M. (2012). *Faithlife Study Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>2</sup> Kynes, Bill. "Union with Christ: The Sum of Our Salvation." *Knowing & Doing* Winter 2007. © 2007 C.S. Lewis Institute.

<sup>3</sup> "Strong's Greek: 1586. ἐκλέγομαι (eklegó)" *Bible Hub*. © 2004 - 2013 by Biblos.com. <<http://biblehub.com/greek/1586.htm>>.

♦ Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.