

We Are Blessed

"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. ⁴For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰to 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.

¹¹In 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, ¹²in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³And 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, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory." Ephesians 1:3-14

First impressions are lasting impressions.

Who can understand the mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility?

There are 4 pillars of our identity in just these 11 verses:

1. We are blessed. (vs. 3)
2. We have been chosen from before the creation of the world. (vs. 4)
3. We have been permanently adopted into the family of God. (vs. 5)
4. We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit as a guarantee! (13b-14)

Application:

Our only adequate response should be worship and humility.

Small Group Questions

1. Share with your group your "first impression" of God. Was it a positive one or a negative one, and how long did you hang on to that impression? How did it affect your relationship with Him?
2. How has that impression affected your ability to receive the true scriptural revelation of who God is and His plans and purposes for you?
3. How does this passage begin to break open for you the limitless possibilities that belong to us because we have been "chosen" by Him?
4. What is your "comfortability factor" with accepting the mystery that we cannot in our human minds reconcile divine sovereignty and human responsibility?
5. Are you convinced that "sovereign grace" is the primary truth upon which we must rest our salvation?
6. Do you sense the assurance that comes with the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? What could you do to grow in that dimension?
7. How does your understanding of these amazing foundational truths affect your ability to worship with passion and humility?