

The Praise of His Glory October 30, 2022

Ephesians 1:11-14

11 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, 12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; 14 this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Ephesus was a great seaport, the 3rd largest community in the Roman Empire after Rome and Alexandria. Ephesians is addressed to Gentiles who are instructed to no longer live as Gentiles but to now live in Christ. They are no longer strangers to the covenant because of their response to the gospel. They have a transformative identity for God's purpose. This appeals to us today because we are also Gentiles that have received the word. Our response to the word is repentance, baptism, and a changed life. Ephesians is an upbeat letter that praises God, Jesus, and the people. The people are encouraged to keep up the good work, to live a life of love following the example set for us by Jesus. If you are ever low in spirit, I encourage you to turn to Ephesians for uplifting inspiration.

Chapter one is one of the most beautiful passages of the Bible with blessings of God. We have received a very special blessing. God has chosen us to be holy, blameless, and in love. God selected us for adoption as children of God through Jesus Christ. This is the will of God and is pleasing to God. So, we praise God for bestowing love upon us and we thank God for redeeming us with God's own blood. Jesus changed everything by dying on the cross. His sacrifice ends the sacrificial system of law, commandments, and regulations. God takes the initiative. It is God's plan.

In the Scripture we see the inheritance as a family relationship. We are adopted by Christ into the family of God as children of God. This is according to the will of God. It is God's purpose. We are set on Christ and focused on Christ and live our lives accordingly by obeying his teachings and mimicking his behavior. You have heard the word, believe in salvation, and are marked for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. So, we praise the glory of the Lord.

I was in the Marine Corps what I started dating Brenda. I wrote letters and taped her picture on the inside of my locker. I drove to Madison Heights every chance I would get. I could not stay away. Love was like a magnet that pulled me in. I would not miss a single opportunity to be with her. This love connection is true with our relationship with the Lord. The biblical letters come from love. Every chance we have we worship and praise the Lord. We cannot stay away because the love is like a magnet that pulls us in. We do not miss opportunities to be here together to worship and praise the Lord.

I invite you to try this. When you encounter someone that is not active in the life of the church and they give you one of the many excuses. Explain to them our motivation for worship and praise. We don't go to church; we go to worship. We praise God because God has blessed us. God chose us and out of love adopted us as children of God. So, we don't go to worship out of duty or commitment but to praise and thank God for the tremendous gift that is given to us. We go out of appreciation and love. Nothing is more

wonderful than God reaching out to embrace us in a loving relationship that is affirmed by our acceptance. The blessings we receive are so tremendous that we can't help but to praise God every chance we get.