

# **Challenging Chapters of the Bible**

CLA Spring 2014

Jim Hoffman

# Glory to God

- **We use 'glory to God' as an expression of praise and we sometimes speak of 'glorifying God'.**
- **Both are good terms, but are perhaps the least understood phrases in the Christian vocabulary.**
- **We tend to use the terms with the understanding that God will be enhanced in some way by our actions.**

# Glory to God

- John 13:31 “The time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory, and God will be glorified because of him.” Jesus
- Rom 15:9 He also came so that the Gentiles might give glory to God for his mercies to them.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:11 Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ.

# Glory to God

- **To read these scriptures and think that God will somehow be improved by what He does, or by what we do is a mistake.**
- **When one is perfect, one cannot be added to, or improved upon.**
- **This is one of the truths that ought to help us worship God.**

# Glory to God

- So what is meant by the terms “glorify God”, “may God be glorified”, and “give glory to God”?
- It is quite simple – when God is seen, He is glorified.
- So when we can enhance our own, or another person’s view of God, He is glorified because He is seen.

# Ephesians One

- 4 Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

# Ephesians One

- 9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious plan regarding Christ, *a plan to fulfill his own good pleasure.*
- 11 Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, *and he makes everything work out according to his plan.* 12 God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would *bring praise and glory to God.*

# Ephesians One

- 14 The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. *He did this so we would praise and glorify him.*
- 18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called— *his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.*



# **Ephesians One**

**If I were to say that “all of life should center around God”, I would be right, but why would I be right?**

# Ephesians One

- His plan, His pleasure, and His glory – does this sound like it is all about Himself?
- It is about Himself and we should be glad that it is – as soon as there is no God, then there is no place or blessing or safety.
- We only exist because of Him, and for Him.

# Ephesians One

- In fact, if we were to exist without Him, we would be hopelessly lost and hopelessly dissatisfied.
- It is only God who gives meaning and purpose to our lives.
- Isaiah 46:9 Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me.

# Ephesians One

- **God is unique in all of the universe – he is in a class all by himself, and no one and no thing compares favorably to him**
- **It is pure folly for us to ever think that life should be about anything but Him!**
- **It shows a fundamental lack of understanding of His majesty, to even think it odd that all of life rightfully centers around Him.**

# Ephesians One

- **In the opening verses of this chapter, three deep theological terms are used and two of them are explosive.**
- **Election and Predestination have probably caused more angst than they should. Why?**
- **We (the Church) get too caught up in not wanting God to be God that we miss the majesty of what He is doing.**

# Ephesians One

- To revisit verse #4 - Even before he made the world, God loved us and *chose us in Christ* to be holy and without fault in his eyes.
- Notice the timing here – before God made anything that was made, He already had us in mind to be His very own.
- *It was His purpose from the beginning that we would glorify Him.*

# Ephesians One

- *It was His purpose from the beginning that we would glorify Him.*
  - If the above is true, then there must be ways for us to fulfill our purpose.  
(revealing Him)
  - How?

# Ephesians One

- **In order for us to appreciate the magnitude of what God did for us, we have to set aside our concept of time.**
- **Before there was anything, there we were at the top of God's mind. (T.O.M.A.)**
- **We and our sin were not some afterthought or plan B – we were planned for, and He determined we would glorify Him.**



# Ephesians One

- And ... we were chosen to be holy. (without holiness, no man shall see the Lord)
- How can this be? We were chosen 'in Christ' and we have been made righteous by God based upon the work of Christ for us.
- Verse #5 reads - God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.

# Ephesians One

- **It was predetermined by God that we would be part of His family through Christ. (predestination)**
- **His method of bringing us into His family is adoption – adopted children did not choose their father, but their father choose them. 😊**
- **We never adopt our own – God only adopts His own.**

# Ephesians One

- Maybe this will help us to understand, or at least appreciate what He has done for us.
- 19 I also pray that you will understand the *incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him*. This is the same mighty power 20 that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.

# Ephesians One

- **9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious plan regarding Christ, a plan to fulfill his own good pleasure.**
- **The Gospel, as we know it, was hidden prior to the death of Christ – no one would have ever imagined a redemption plan that involved death on a cross by the Creator of all things.**

# Ephesians One

- **13 And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. 14 The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.**
- **Romans 8:15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."**

# Questions