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# **EPHESIANS**

## **Chapter 1:1-6**

**Jim Hoffman**

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# The origin of the letter.

- Because not all of the oldest manuscripts contain the phrase ‘who are at Ephesus’ and because there are no personal greetings (as was Paul’s style) this letter may have been a circular one. Circular letters were intended to be passed from church to church to be read.
  - There are also about 35 verses in Ephesians that are nearly word for word copies of verses in the letter to Colosse.
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# The City of Ephesus

- It was a cultural and trading center in the world.
  - Today the area is called Turkey.
  - In it's day, Ephesus had all of the trappings of our major cities today; sports, entertainment, commerce, and an assortment of religions. (see Acts 19:24-35)
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# Christianity and Ephesus

- Acts 18:24-26 where Priscilla and Aquila disciplined Apollos.
  - Acts 19:1-7 where Paul instructs the Ephesian believers regarding the Holy Spirit.
  - Paul established a church of some significance there as seen by their impact on their culture. (see Acts 19:23-27)
  - And, of course, the church at Ephesus is also one of the seven churches in Rev 2-3.
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# The Church at Ephesus

- In about one generation, the church at Ephesus changed.
  - This is the church that shook it's culture and affected the economy of the city by disrupting the idol making business. (ACTS 19:23-27)
  - In Revelation 3 we see that they are doing OK, but had become much more tolerant and much less effective.
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## What lesson(s) do you see for us?

- How do you manage the presentation of the gospel to a changing culture without changing the message?
  - How do we ensure that the next generation will carry on in our places?
  - Other lessons or warnings for us?
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# Paul, the Apostle

- Apostle. A “messenger.” Two groups are mentioned in the New Testament. The Twelve: especially trained and commissioned by Jesus to be primary witnesses to His resurrection and His teachings, and to spread the gospel. They will judge (rule) the twelve tribes of Israel in the millennial kingdom (Luke 22:30). Also used of others directly commissioned by Christ, including Paul, Barnabas, Andronicus, Junia, and James, the Lord’s brother. (from Dr. Stanley Horton through Systematic Theology © 1994, 1995 by Gospel Publishing House. All rights reserved.)
  - See also, Rev 2:2b for an example of how some falsely take the title of apostle for themselves.
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# Ephesians 1:3-14


- The past; we were chosen. (vs 3-6a)
    - The involvement of the Father
  
  - The present; we are being saved (vs 6b-11)
    - The involvement of the Son and the Spirit
  
  - The future; inheritance (vs 12-14)
    - The involvement of the Holy Spirit
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## Eph 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ

- We bless God by praising him for his goodness; he blesses us with his goodness.
  - There is nothing that we need in terms of spiritual blessings that we do not already have.
  - If we already have ‘every spiritual blessing’ then we need nothing else; we simply need to do more with what we already have in Christ.
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# What more could we want?

- 2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. NIV
  - Col 2:9-10 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; NASB
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# We have all that we need right now.

- Our problem is that we think struggles in this life are somehow signs of spiritual weakness.
  - What if struggles that come through no fault of our own are really more indicative of spiritual strength than they are of spiritual weakness?
  - Could it be that we sometimes look at life backwards and upside down?
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We think that hard times come from  
poor performance on our part.



□ Job 4:7 "Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? NIV (Eliphaz's words to Job)

□ John 9:1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" NIV

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# Standing and State

- We will never be anymore spiritual or godly in our standing before God than we are right now. That standing has been purchased for us by the blood of Christ.
  - However, our current state of personal righteousness often wavers.
  - The part that we are responsible for is inconsistent, but our eternal standing is too important to God to be left to anyone other than himself.
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# If we have everything that we need then why isn't life more heavenly?

## □ Two lines of thinking;

- (1) says that we should have heaven on earth now and should not have to wait for anything. After all, we have already been blessed with all that we need haven't we?.
  - (2) says that this life is not all there is and this is but a brief moment on the eternal scale so what seems like a long wait now for our blessings may one day be seen for what it is; a brief moment of waiting to see our state catch up to our standing.
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If we have everything that we need then why isn't life more heavenly?

- 2 Cor 4:8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; KJV
  - 2 Cor 4:17 For our light affliction , which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; KJV
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Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen,  
Predestined, and Adopted by God.

Eph 1:4 For he **chose us** in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he **predestined us** to be **adopted** as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will —  
NIV

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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- We were chosen by God no matter which translation you choose.
    - Eph 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. NIV
    - Eph 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him NKJV
    - Eph 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him NASB
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- Caution ..... We are going to spend a few moments talking about a subject that has split churches and created factions in the Christian church.
  - Many avoid the subject altogether, but we do not have that luxury because we are studying Ephesians.
  - Do not let some extreme positions rob you of the joy contained in this truth.
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- I do not understand the doctrine of election, but I believe that God chose me to be saved.
  - I do not understand predestination, but the Bible tells me that I was predestined to be adopted into God's family.
  - The fact that these things are hard to understand does not make them untrue.
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- 1 Peter 1:2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: NIV
- Acts 13:48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. NKJV





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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- Perhaps the greatest disservice we do is to try to stuff what we cannot grasp into something that we can.
  - We cannot reconcile God choosing us along side of our experience of choosing Him, but the Bible seems to teach both.
  - Do not allow your need to have tidy doctrine with no loose ends rob you of the mystery God intended.
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- So why are there mysteries in the Bible?
  - And why are there some 'loose ends'?
  - What if the mysteries of God are there to remind us that He is bigger than we can imagine, and deeper than we can fathom?
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- We believe in creation, but we cannot understand it fully.
  - We believe in Noah's flood, but who can imagine the world enveloped in water?
  - We believe that the Bible is the word of God, yet we know that it was penned by men.
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- And what about this one in particular?
  - I believe it's because when we run into things that we cannot grasp, and things too hard for us to understand that we are forced to rely on faith.
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of this letter is filled with things for us to do. What if one of God's ways of motivating us to serve Him is to show us how BIG He really is?
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- I know that teaching on election and predestination tends to make us nervous and uncertain, and perhaps it should.
  - Just remember, just because we can't 'get' it does not mean that God cannot work it all out.
  - Yes, we all must exercise our will and believe, but one does not negate the other.
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

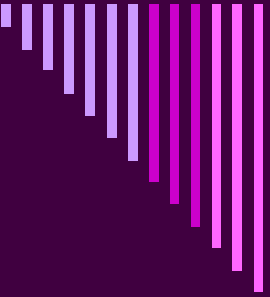
- Chosen in Christ to be holy before the world was ever created.
  - Imagine this; the day will come when our state and practice will be as holy as our standing and position are now.
  - We will fellowship with God very much like Adam and Eve did in the garden before sin entered the race.
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## Every Spiritual Blessing #1, Chosen, Predestined, and Adopted by God.

- God specifically chose us to be his children. He adopts us and gives us all of the privileges and standing of his own Son. (Romans 8:17)
  - It is an awesome illustration of just what grace is, and what grace can do and of the gaps it can span.
  - God is to be praised for orchestrating our salvation and when we finally experience heaven we will spare no energy in praising him.
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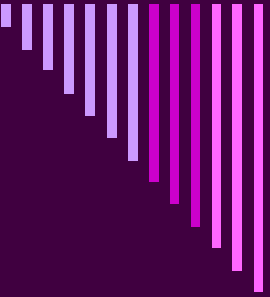


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# Every spiritual blessing #2; Accepted by God.

## □ Accepted

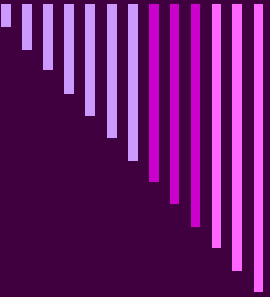
- Eph 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which **He made us accepted** in the Beloved. NKJV
  - NT:5487 charitoo (khar-ee-to'-o); from NT:5485; to grace, i.e. **indue with special honor**: (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)
  - Because we are His children, we are accepted and welcome in His house.
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# Every spiritual blessing #2; Accepted by God.

- Accepted by God; what on earth could that mean?
    - Fear is replaced by reverence
    - Uncertainty gives way to confidence.
    - Service is no longer a means to get, but a means to say thanks.
    - It means that I also have a certain responsibility to live up to the position I have been given.
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# Every spiritual blessing #2; Accepted by God.

- Accepted by God; what in heaven could that mean?
    - We are assured that we will be given entrance into heaven.
    - We are assured that one day all that we have held on to by faith will be beheld with our eyes.
    - We will one day realize what a position of favor from the King we have; even if it doesn't look like it now.
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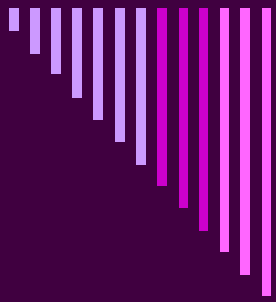


# What Do You Think?

- What thoughts cross your mind when you consider that God chose you?
- What does it mean to your everyday Christianity to be accepted by God?







What do you think?