

# POWER

E P H E S I A N S

God's Salvation Plan ...  
February 19, 2023



"Pound for pound, Ephesians may well be the most influential document in history."  
-Klyne Snodgrass

## REVIEW: BACKGROUND STORY FOR THE LETTER

- The letter was written by **Paul** 5 years after he spent several years in Ephesus getting the church started.
- Written to the Ephesian church. They met in in homes in **groups** of 30-40 people in the massive city of Ephesus.
- Ephesus was capital of Roman province, highly occultic as the home of the Temple of **Diana**. (Artemis)
- The content of the letter is relevant to the world we live in as we face many of the same challenges.
- Paul wrote to make sure the believers were aware of the **resources** available to help them live in Christ

## REVIEW: THE PAST PART OF GOD'S SALVATION PLAN:

- Ephesians 1:3-14 is **one** sentence in Greek and speaks of God's salvation plan, past, present, and future.
- God's plan for our salvation began **before** the world was created.
  - *Ephesians 1:4 (NIV84)* <sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight . . . .
  - The Bible teaches us that we are **incapable** of choosing Christ unless God first draws us to Him.
    - *John 6:44 (NIV84)* <sup>44</sup>"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him . . . .
    - He chose us to be holy. Holy refers to an inner spiritual quality of **purity**.
    - He chose us to be blameless. Blameless refers to outer **conduct** on life.
- Paul said that we were **predestined** to be adopted as God's child.
  - *Ephesians 1:5-6 (NIV84)* In love <sup>5</sup>he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
  - The Greek word predestine (proorizō) means to determine **beforehand**.
  - There are two ways that people in the church have typically understood this.

Calvinism	Armenianism/Wesleyanism
Calvin defined predestination as God's eternal decree by which He <b>determined</b> by Himself whatever He willed to happen with every person, creating some persons for eternal life and others for eternal damnation. (Grudem, <i>Systematic Theology</i> , 677)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God decreed to create the world and to appoint Christ as Redeemer, Mediator, and Savior to pay for the sins of the world.</li> <li>2. God decreed to save everyone who would receive Christ and continue in their belief.</li> <li>3. God decreed to give all future persons the means (i.e., the Word, sacraments, and so forth) to believe in Christ, making grace available to all.</li> <li>4. God decreed to save particular persons based on His <b>foreknowledge</b> of who would believe and persevere. (Allison, <i>Historical Theology</i>, 468).</li> </ol>
The Most Important Thing is What These Views Have in Common.	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A person must still <b>choose</b> salvation for themselves. No one is automatically saved.</li> <li>2. The Gospel must still be <b>preached</b> so people can hear and choose</li> <li>3. If you are hearing this message, you can choose today.</li> </ol> <p><i>Joshua 24:15; Matthew 3:1-2; Matthew 4:17; John 3:16-18; John 5:39-40; John 6:37; Romans 10:13 ; 1 Peter 1:1-2</i></p>	

## NEW STUFF: THE CURRENT AND ACTIVE SALVATION PLAN: REDEMPTION

*Ephesians 1:7 (NIV84)* <sup>7</sup>In him we have **redemption** through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

1. The Greek word Paul used for redemption is the word apolyrōsis and it means to release on the payment of a **ransom**.
  - A. Ransom: the demanded **price** to release someone from captivity, bondage, or detention.
    - Note that the captor is **powerlessness** to liberate themselves or to ever pay the ransom.

2. Every human being is **enslaved** by sin.

A. We are born into the bondage of a **sinful nature** that is corrupt.

**Romans 5:12 (LB)** <sup>12</sup>When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. His sin spread death throughout all the world, so everything began to grow old and die, for all sinned.

**Psalms 51:5 (NLT)** <sup>5</sup>For I was born a sinner— yes, from the moment my mother conceived me.

B. We have all **chosen** to do sinful things.

**Romans 3:23 (NLT)** <sup>23</sup>For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.

C. The consequence for our sin is captivity and **slavery**.

**John 8:34 (NLT)** <sup>34</sup>Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin.

- A slave in the Bible is described as someone who is legally owned by someone else and whose entire livelihood and purpose is **controlled** by the master.
- Jesus is literally saying that our sin has resulted in our captivity and our being **controlled** by sin!  
**Romans 7:14 (GW)** <sup>14</sup>I . . . have a corrupt nature, sold as a slave to sin.

3. The ransom required to secure our freedom is **death**.

**Romans 6:23 (LEB)** <sup>23</sup>For the compensation due sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Hebrews 9:22 (NIV84)** <sup>22</sup>In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

A. Because death is the only acceptable ransom, we are **powerless** to liberate ourselves.

- If we give our life and we're still a slave to sin, we'll spend eternity **separated** from God.  
**Isaiah 59:2 (NLT)** <sup>2</sup>It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.
- Because the only ransom is death, we cannot **earn** our freedom or forgiveness.  
**Leviticus 17:11 (NIV84)** <sup>11</sup>For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

B. Because Christ was **sinless**, He can offer the ransom to liberate me.

**Exodus 12:5 (GW)** <sup>5</sup>Your animal must be a one-year-old male that has no defects. You may choose a lamb or a young goat.

- **The problem with the O.T. Sacrificial System was that animal sacrifices never really took sins away; they only covered them.**  
**Hebrews 10:3–4 (NIV84)** <sup>3</sup>But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, <sup>4</sup>because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
- **In Jesus, God did away with the old system for a far better one.**  
**Hebrews 10:11–12 (GW)** <sup>11</sup>Every day each priest performed his religious duty. He offered the same type of sacrifice again and again. Yet, these sacrifices could never take away sins. <sup>12</sup>However, this chief priest [Jesus] made one sacrifice for sins, and this sacrifice lasts forever. Now he holds the honored position—the one next to God the Father on the heavenly throne.
- **In Jesus, God provided a sacrifice that was without blemish.**  
**1 Peter 2:22 (GW)** <sup>22</sup>Christ never committed any sin. He never spoke deceitfully.

C. Biblical redemption therefore refers to the act of God by which He Himself paid the ransom the price for sin and to secure our freedom.

**Galatians 1:4 (NLT)** <sup>4</sup>Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live.

**Ephesians 1:7 (NIV84)** <sup>7</sup>In him we have **redemption** through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

#### WRAP-UP:

**1 Peter 1:18–20 (NLT)** <sup>18</sup>For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. <sup>19</sup>It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. <sup>20</sup>God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake.