

***To the Praise of His Glorious Grace***

Ephesians 1:3-14

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Overview: Paul gives praise to the Triune God for the grace that underlies the great plan of redemption. Before the foundation of the world, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit covenanted together to save sinners by making them holy and blameless before God. The Father graciously elects us unto salvation and providentially directs history to that end. The Son graciously lives a perfect life in our place and dies the death that we deserve. The Spirit graciously regenerates our hearts and guarantees that all who come to Christ by faith will receive the promised inheritance. Thus, our salvation is a work of God's grace from beginning to end.

01. The glorious grace which underlies our salvation is a beautiful testimony to the intra-Trinitarian love that exists between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

02. The glorious grace which is displayed through our salvation confirms that all who have been chosen by the Father and purchased by the Son will persevere through the Spirit.

03. The glorious grace by which God has provided our salvation gives us every reason to remain humble and every encouragement to share the gospel.

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & DISCOVERY

1. In light of this text, are you able to outline the work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with respect to the plan of salvation? In what ways does each person of the Trinity contribute to our salvation? Why is it important to ascribe each aspect to each person while at the same time confessing that no person of the Trinity is greater than another? See John 17 for further consideration.

2. In what ways does the doctrine of election refer to Israel, the church, and individuals? (See Deuteronomy 7:6-8; 1 Peter 1:1-2; Romans 8:29-30). Do you think God's choice of a nation or individual makes Him unfair regarding those nations and individuals that are not chosen? How does a proper understanding of election unto salvation accentuate God's grace?

3. Based on this text, do you agree that the incarnation was necessary in order for the plan of redemption to be fulfilled? What is the danger of speculating about ways in which God could have saved the world instead of considering how God actually chose to save the world? See 1 Corinthians 1:21-25 for further insight.

4. When you reflect on your own conversion, would you say that you were aware that God was already at work in your life? In what ways was He at work? As you think about your life as a believer now, are you aware of how God is still at work in your life? In what ways is He at work?

5. Since God's plan includes uniting all things in him, things in heaven and on earth (verse 10), how should we live as Christians in relation to one another? How does the free grace of the gospel encourage you to share the good news with people who are not normally considered likely candidates for conversion? See 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 also.

For Further Reading: J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (IVP Academic, 1991).

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