

## With Love, from DAD

Ephesians 1:3-6 Sunday AM, April 23, 2023

**Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 1:1–6** (NASB95) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, **To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:** <sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Last week, we began with just the first two verses and thought a bit about true riches—things eternally valuable. In a day when people question the reality of anything beyond their own feelings and experiences, when words change meaning on a whim, and when the eternal seems irrelevant, we met a man whose life’s mission is tied to his identity with the incarnation of the eternal God. I’m an **apostle of Christ Jesus**. I’m under His Name and authority and I come with His agenda—and this agenda is TOTALLY in line with the **will of God**. Paul was secure in his identity and mission because of whose He was. He wrote to others rooted in the same identity. **To the saints who are at Ephesus**—the called out ones—the ones who are at home with, who belong. How can you tell who these are? These saints were described as the ones **who are faithful in Christ Jesus**—they are identified by Christ and they serve Him faithfully. There is no question who calls the shots in their lives. The faithful have faith—though sometimes weak or misguided, they trust in, they believe in Christ—they find life, meaning, purpose with and under Christ. Does this describe you? Where have your thoughts centered on Christ this week? What about Christ has directed your thoughts, actions, and emotions? All who are saints, who are faithful in Christ Jesus, are active recipients of God’s goodness. <sup>2</sup> **Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. God showers good things--needed provision, hope, protection, and order in a world of chaos. That’s who He is! That’s what He does. If THIS is your identity, sing praise to God for His good gifts!

### \*Hymn #111: Join All the Glorious Names

This week, we see more of privileged position of the redeemed—those bought back by God to fellowship with Him and service for Him. <sup>3</sup> **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,** <sup>4</sup> **just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, In love** <sup>5</sup> **He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,** What does this mean? Whatever it includes, it is surrounded by glowing terms of privilege for the recipients and awe and thanksgiving toward the Giver. Do you profess faith in Christ? Do you profess being one of the redeemed? Than do you feel privileged and are you filled with awe and thanksgiving and renewed sense of loyalty in service toward the Giver? Study this passage—others that refer to what Paul discusses, listen not merely to what Pastor says, but for evidences of the world where his comments live—what has he studied, read that point to Paul’s disposition of worship here in Ephesians. Keep studying, always looking to know more of Him. Then you can worship Him even when it seems too much to understand. That’s Paul’s attitude as he concludes Romans 11. Sing it.

### \*Hymn (Powerpoint): Romans Doxology \*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Choir: People Need the Lord Scripture: 1

**Thessalonians 1:1–2:13** Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, **To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:** Grace to you and peace. <sup>2</sup> We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; <sup>3</sup> constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, <sup>4</sup> knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; <sup>5</sup> for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup> You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, <sup>7</sup> so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. <sup>8</sup> For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. <sup>9</sup> For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come. <sup>1</sup> For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. <sup>2</sup> But after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition. <sup>3</sup> For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit; <sup>4</sup> but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. <sup>5</sup> For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness—<sup>6</sup> nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. <sup>7</sup> But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children. <sup>8</sup> Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. <sup>9</sup> For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. <sup>10</sup> You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; <sup>11</sup> just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children, <sup>12</sup> so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. <sup>13</sup> For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it not as* the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

### Offering: \*Doxology:

I left out a couple of phrases. All of the blessings we receive point back to Him, not us. All His deeds toward any of us show His glorious grace—**In love** <sup>5</sup> **He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,** <sup>6</sup> **to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.** We’ve sung this song for some time. Here’s where it originates. If you are just about praising God for YOU, you’ve missed it. When He opens your eyes to see His goodness, it should lead to looking at the One giving this goodness, seeing not just what you need, but more of how His grace sustains all under His control. God is good and powerfully works His good among sinful man.

### \*Hymn (Powerpoint): Come Praise and Glorify

**You may be seated.** There’s one more phrase Pastor Jahn will work with this morning. **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.** His work on behalf of those who are truly His does not stop until you are like Him—holy and blameless. This does not mean that you are committed to be a better you, to spending your energy trying to be as good or better than those around you or for you to feel judged and not accepted by other Christians. NO, you were called to be holy and blameless and the only way this can take place is with a foreign righteousness—Christ’s, but also a present responsibility—live by the Spirit according to the will of God. Both God’s blessings and God’s will speak LOUDLY in our passage. Live for God’s will by looking to Him—studying Him, following Him. It affects each choice and your priorities in making those choices. God’s will always prioritizes people. God has an opinion about who you spend time with, how you should respond to them, and what love seeks to accomplish in their lives. And right at the top of all interaction is the knowledge that their

greatest need is fellowship with God Himself—people need the Lord. How do chosen people live? You heard an amazing example in I Thessalonians—look at it again. The reputation of their gospel proclamation and love for one another spread widely! They displayed the character and message of God as they lived and worked through life with people. While they were recognized, the glory went to God because they were focused on His will and His gracious provision to accomplish that will. It takes work to live for God's will—look to Him, study Him, follow Him. Take time to be holy.

**\*Hymn #441: Take Time to be Holy**

**Message: With Love, from DAD Ephesians 1:3-6**

**\*Hymn #66: To God be the Glory      \*Prayer**