

# Chosen for Adoption

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[0:00] Ephesians 1 and verse 1. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,! To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus.

! Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love, he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will, to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the one he loves.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

And he made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

[1:28] In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory.

Well, good morning. It's a privilege to be with you once again. And I'm grateful to God indeed for the fellowship that we have with you folks here in Bremen.

It's really a blessing to us. And I particularly want to thank Aaron and Cindy for all the work they do on behalf of Christian Compassion Ministry. We are very, very grateful indeed to them and for all the fellowship that we do have with you as a church.

We thank you for everything and it's a privilege to come here. For those of you who don't know really that the reason we started Christian Compassion Ministries, I've said this before, was that we suddenly had a gift from a church in a place called Bremen in the States to help the poor and needy.

[3:00] That was way back, I think about 1992 or 93. And at that stage, we had been helping a little project which was supporting some tribal people raising pigs.

And the whole project fell through and we did not know what to do with the money. And it was there in our bank, I think for about a year. And the Lord directed us because there was a growing concern for a number of us in the church about some children sleeping in the street just about 100 yards from our church building.

And so it's your fault that we started Christian Compassion Ministries. Well, it's been a great blessing to us. The Lord has used you indeed to do that.

And we started Christian Compassion Ministries in a little apartment at the back of our church. And some of you will have seen, those who were here earlier, exactly how it has grown. And we are grateful indeed for all the fellowship that we have with you in that particular ministry and in other ministries in the church.

Now, I'm afraid I don't have an NIV with me and I'm going to be using New American Standard Bible. And I'm just going to read a couple of the verses that we read earlier again from Ephesians in chapter 1.

[4:15] So if you turn with me to that portion again of God's Word. And I'm just going to read from the New American Standard Bible. I'm sure you can follow it easy in the NIV. I'll read from verse 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 just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him.

In love he predestined us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself according to the kind intention of his will to the praise of the glory of his grace which he freely bestowed on us in the beloved.

This portion of God's Word down here was a great blessing to me back in 1967. When I became a Christian and God had saved me I used to attend a Methodist church and I had done all sorts of things I had the thought of easy believism I'd led lots of people to pray a prayer and told them they were Christians.

I remember one occasion when I was a student at Bible school that I'd prayed the prayer with this young man we'd knelt down by a chair following the meeting and I assured him from John 1.12 that he was now a Christian and you know and everything and then the next Sunday he was not there at the church and then the following Sunday he also was not there at the church so I went looking for him on the Sunday evening and I climbed up the stairs into this apartment block where he lived and I banged on the door of the apartment and his sister opened the door and I asked for him and she said he's not here and I could see him ducking down behind a chair in the corner one of Brian Ellis' converts and God was beginning to use that sort of thing in my life to show me something that was absolutely lacking that I was not seeing and it took me time when I went out to the Philippines when I arrived in 1966 and in 1967 when I was doing lots of language study in a way out small little tiny town having very little else to do because I had to struggle with the language that God was leading me and I was able to get some books particularly from the banner of Truth Trust which were a great help to me and then I read Ephesians chapter 1 and Ephesians chapter 1 became so clear that God is sovereign it is he who saves it is he who redeems his people who have been chosen from before the foundation of the world it is humbling but it is to praise and glory of God

[7:24] Amen and I do thank the Lord for giving me that understanding for his grace to me for his blessing to me and since 1967 we have sought to seek to preach and praise praise God in proclamation of his gospel of sovereign grace but you see many people don't like this doctrine of election here that comes out in this particular passage he chose us in Christ in him before the foundation of the world I mean I was in a Methodist church originally and of course what I believed and have been taught and everything else was that God chose people who he foresaw that they would believe when the gospel was preached to them that's not what it says in scripture he chose us in him before the foundation of the world and it comes out very clearly that there's nothing about anything in us and of course people are not happy with the doctrine that particular understanding of the doctrine of election which is very clear as we begin to read more and more of scripture there are two basic objections

I suppose to the doctrine of election man has free will people will say well that is true in one way that's it if you offered me two types of ice cream we have a purple ice cream in the Philippines called Ubi ice cream I don't like the color purple I'm sorry if you're wearing that this morning but I don't like Ubi ice cream because on occasion when I arrived in the Philippines it's a root crop which is purple and they put a big plate in front of me in a house I was visiting a big pile of this root crop up there like that and I thought I've got to eat this haven't I I didn't realize I'm only supposed to take a little portion but they didn't give me a saucer or anything and I sat there for almost half an hour struggling to put this stuff down and that's it you see Ubi but it's something I don't like I prefer chocolate ice cream there's that that's nothing really to do with free will it's a free choice of something of that nature but this is it but if I suddenly said

I want to fly and I climbed up on a tower somewhere and I said I'm going to fly and I jumped off and flapped my wings well I'd probably break my neck but if I didn't you'd probably take me to some insane asylum or something because we're not created to fly we have free will yes but the free will of choice is according to the nature that God has given us we cannot go against our nature and we are sinners by nature we're born and dead in trespasses and sins it goes on to say in Ephesians chapter 2 and we cannot change our nature we are men and women we've been created this way but we have fallen to sin through our father Adam and we become sinners by nature we inherit a sinful nature and we cannot change that nature only God can so man has free will yes to do what

we do according to our natures others would say it's not fair not fair that God has chosen some to salvation in other words it would be just and dear with us according to what we deserve but we all deserve to go to hell we all deserve the punishment of our sins we all deserve to be damned well God in his goodness has chosen a people for himself we may not fully understand it we may not know it but we bow to him we know that he is right and good and gracious and merciful and absolutely perfect and no one knows of course who the elect are who those who is chosen but on the authority of God's word a preacher can say such as me that if you will turn from your sins and trust in

Christ he will save you from your sins we have the authority of that and this election of course is here that we should be holy and blameless before him he's changing us and making us and preparing us to be with him in glory although in this life perhaps we will not be there as yet but I love that verse in John that when we shall see him then we shall be like him in 1st John chapter 3 then we shall be like him no more sin nothing of this world but also you see this adoption here he said what he's saying he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him in love in love he predestined us to adoption as sons and that's really what I want us to look at this morning that we've been adopted we God's people have been chosen to be his children to belong to him in a special way now somebody was asking us at me earlier about adoption in the Philippines well we have had one or two children from our homes adopted but we're not set up as an adoption agency and most people want to adopt babies anyway most of our children are older and are not really and many of them aren't really available for adoption as they do have relatives sometimes terrible relatives in that way but this is it adoption and this is before the foundation of the world he chose a people to become his children now let's remember there is only one son of God that is the

Lord Jesus Christ we're not talking in terms of becoming just like in the same capacity as the Lord Jesus Christ but he's chosen a people to be his children adopted by him there are of course the terminology of sons of God or children of God in scripture remember when the angels came before God in Job chapter one they are called the sons of God and Satan came along with them they were that's another terminology that is used in scripture for angels when Moses was sent to speak to Pharaoh God says to him this is what you shall say to the Lord this says the Lord Israel is my son my firstborn if you were to let my people go this is it my firstborn Jeremiah the same sort of pattern is said God says for I'm a father to Israel Ephraim is my firstborn this intimacy of a son to the father and God is our father but in the whole of the

[14 : 20] New Testament of course whereas Israel was God's chosen people we now see that God's chosen people come from every race and nation and tribe and all of this is this is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in the Old Testament and so this sonship now is for all the people of God if we are truly the Lord's we are his children and we look unto him we have that relationship to him so for we can cry out our father who art in heaven we call to him as our father we've been adopted into his family Lord Jesus of course is the firstborn he is the son the elder brother but now we have this family relationship to our God and so adoption is clearly taught this adoption by God of a children to himself is clearly taught here in the New Testament let me read a few verses

I'm sorry again these verses are from the New American Standard Bible but Romans 8 and verse 14 reading this portion for all who are being led by the spirit of God these are the sons of God for you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again but you've received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out Abba Father the spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God and if children heirs also heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with him so we may also be glorified with him I'm going to refer back to that verse later on but again in Galatians you know the passage in Galatians chapter 4 it says this verse 4 but when the fullness of time came God sent forth his son born of a woman born under the law so that he might redeem those who are under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons because you are sons

God has sent forth the spirit of his son into our hearts crying Abba Father therefore you are no longer a slave but a son and if a son then an heir through God the apostle John also agrees completely obviously with this in the scripture so in 1st John and chapter 3 we read this verse 1 see how great the love the father has bestowed on us that we would be called children of God and such we are for this reason the world does not know us because it did not know him beloved now we are

children of God it has not appeared as yet what we will be we know that when he appears we will be like him because we shall see him just as he is so this is a great privilege the great privilege wonderful privilege that we are the children of God we who've been redeemed by the precious blood of the of our savior of the

Lord Jesus and I want to say this this morning whatever the problems you may be facing the difficulties you may be going through perhaps in your workplace perhaps where you live perhaps something with your relatives whatever it might be one of the wonderful truths is that God loves you dear Christian you're his child he's chosen you and made you his child it says in love he predestined us in love he predestined us to be his children this whole passage here in what we started off in reading from verse 4 onwards here verse 3 onwards right down to verse 14 in the original and we wouldn't do this in English is really one sentence in the Greek and so all the periods and all the other things that are stuck in there have just been put in there to break it up and make it perhaps more easy for us in the English language to understand it but it is just one massive great sentence of the wonders of God's love this is what it is and why did God love you and me Christian I don't know there's nothing in us to make us to be loved by him in fact we deserve nothing from him as we've already said oh yes there's no difference we're no difference to the worse if God had left us we would just be doing what the whole of the world is doing in many places we could be in wickedness and vileness but God has loved us and chose us and redeemed us there's a little old book I'm not sure if any of you have read it it's very British it's about a man called Billy Bray now Billy Bray was an old tin miner in Cornwall back in the early 19th century he worked underground and he was often a vile man he was sort of up to fight anybody and he would quarrel with anybody and he would have a fight literally a fight with punching and kicking and everything else he was a wicked man a vile tongue things came out of his mouth and everything else but God met with him and he lay on the floor of his room

[20:01] I think it's four days not eating as God was dealing with him and his sin and God saved him and redeemed him and he became a child of the living God and one of the things he used to say he said this you can lock me in a barrel and I'll shout glory hallelujah through the bunghole he would say I am the son of the king glory hallelujah I am the son of the king a poor old tin miner but he was the son of the king the king of glory and you dear child you dear Christian are a son and daughter of the living God what a privilege that is wonderful privilege oh what it is and we have this privilege we can go to him at any time now if I was to walk up to Buckingham Palace in England as I'm an Englishman and I could say to the soldier or the guard or the policeman on the gate I want to see the queen he said he'd laugh in my face without some special invitation and everything else and probably something in my hand that I could present and everything else

I wouldn't get in to see the queen by just marching up there but you and I can go before the very throne of God in prayer we come before him and we say father forgive me father I love you and we know he loves us and he loves to hear us come before him and speak to him and cry out to him bring all our needs bring all our troubles bring all our problems but we glorify him and we thank him and we worship him and he's always ready to hear us he's not too busy to talk to us we as people who are parents sometimes even too busy sorry son I can't spend the time now I can't do that now later perhaps this evening or something but God doesn't say that to us does he he's always there he's ready to hear us and listen to us we can draw near to the throne of grace and we have the promises of God the great promises of

God that he will listen to us and hear us listen to what the Lord Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount chapter 7 of Matthew verse 11 if you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children how much more will your father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him the very promises of God what a privilege we also have an inheritance I have no living relatives as far as I know my wife is my family and her family but when my father died there was an old car and I think I got \$450 for it you can see how old it was and I think there was something like probably one and a half thousand dollars in the bank that was my inheritance really from my father they were never my parents were never very well off but what inheritance we have in Galatians chapter 4 verse 7 you're no longer a slave but a son and if a son then an heir through

God or Romans 8 17 we read if children heirs also heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ we inherit the glory we inherit all the goodness and the love and the mercy and the wonders of glory they belong to us as God's children we may have nothing in this world and we have some members in our church who have almost next to nothing one child one of the street men is alcoholic he's now

offered alcohol and he's a member of our church and he doesn't know how to keep a job he's in his late 50s and our deacons are working with him and trying to train him he's been doing some work in Christian compassion ministries and getting a little bit of wage trying to train him how to even work even because he'd been on the streets as an alcoholic we have Almira she's another street person got eight children six are with her they sit in church with her we don't know how long she's going to live really she's got very severe tuberculosis she was coughing blood just previously before I came back and we got her on medicine and everything we're helping her but she can't really work very well can't work she's too sick but she's an heir of God she has all the glories that wait her oh yes she'll be with there'll be no more sickness no more pain no more crying in the glory with our God we have an inheritance yes we've been given as well as the children of God the Holy Spirit he is with us is he not listen to Romans 8 14 for all who are being led by the Spirit of God these are the sons of God that is why we are to live differently in this world the Holy Spirit is directing us we are to live as the children of God we are to do his will we are to praise him we are to glorify him and the Holy Spirit is directing us he convicts us when we are going the wrong way when we are drifting off into some sinful thing or thought or ideas yes he's there we are to turn from sin and to seek to live by his with his help and grace to live holy lives to the glory of

[25 : 46] God we are to seek to be more and more like our father who is in heaven our holy God and we have been given the Holy Spirit to do this and he does this we are also because we are the children of God God disciplines us you know there are parents who never discipline their children and you can see it that's not love a parent because they love their children disciplines them to teach them to do that which is right and good to be polite to be kind to be to live with other people to act rightly don't we not and so the discipline has come any family a family of the parents will discipline their children they seek to bring them up in a godly fashion and they long to see their children coming to know the Lord Jesus themselves and we have the greatest father our God is absolutely perfect and he disciplines us for our good listen to this in Hebrews chapter 12 verse 5 have you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to your sons my son do not regard lightly the discipline of the

Lord nor fate when you are approved by him for those whom the Lord loves he disciplines and he scourges every son whom he receives and of course if not if he didn't discipline us we're not his children you would not discipline somebody else's children the neighbor's child or something like that you'd have a real problem with your neighbor I think yes no but God disciplines us because he loves us just as you parents love your children and you want them to do good and to do right we also share as children of God in the sufferings of Christ and future glory listen to Romans 8 17 again if children heirs also heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him

Christians often suffer you can be rejected by friends even family we have people in the Philippines who really their family doesn't want much to do with them I remember a young lady came to us she was a college college girl probably about 1920 she says I don't feel I belong to my family anymore because when they say the oration that's prayers to the Virgin Mary rosary at six o'clock in the evening she doesn't join in of course not she's a Christian she doesn't want to pray before the statue and everything and the family says you don't belong to us anymore look at you're not with us that's very hard in any family and Filipino families are very close so she found it very very difficult well of course she did I have conducted at least two weddings when no one well the first wedding one person did turn up from the bride's family an uncle but her parents and brothers and sisters never came to the wedding because it was a protestant wedding and their daughter had become a protestant and in fact she was pushed out of the house and could not remain in the home because she had become a protestant or she had become a christian that's what it was so hard you think a girl on her wedding day and your parents aren't there and your brothers and sisters your immediate family are not with you and they're opposed to you that hurts and that's difficult oh yes called to suffer with christ and that's it christians often suffer i know a young man who had to resign from his job why did he he was an accountant and his boss wanted him to have two account books one for the tax man and the other one which was genuine and he said i can't do this look for another job and jobs weren't that easy to come by but god was gracious to him because he honoured god and would not do what his boss wanted him to do to fiddle the books and cook the books and he actually ended up working for summer institute of linguistics as weekly bible translators in their accounting yes god provided for him but he had to make that stand and suffer loss of a job and

that's not easy anyway as many of you know the difficulties that goes through there and some have faced persecution and you know some of the terrible things that some muslims who've turned to christ have faced the wicked and the things that have happened to them believers in africa and perhaps the middle east and places like pakistan what has happened to them like arif khan you probably know who was murdered there in pakistan the missionary oh yes suffering persecution for christ yet future glory awaits us as paul goes on in romans 8 and verse 18 for i consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is revealed to us as the children of god we will be with our god and we're not alone remember in our adoption no we have a new family a new family we are brethren we are the family of god god now i've come here from the other side of the world and i enjoy coming here and meeting some of you i've known for many years and i it's good because immediately we're one together we're we who are the children of god we belong to each other because we are the family of god and this is one of the things you see i mentioned earlier far as i know i have no blood relatives i was the only child and my i have no nobody for as i know i have my

wife but wherever i go in this world i meet those who love the saviour's name who rejoice in the lord jesus christ and the forgiveness of their sins and you immediately feel that oneness with them you're one you're we belong together and that's one of the great privileges and and the experience do we not yes we're a family we're a family and sadly is it not that some perhaps of our blood relatives will not be with us in glory for as i know my parents weren't believers that's hard is it not very difficult sometimes but god knows best and god does not do anything wrong he always does what is right and we trust him and look to him remember he is our loving heavenly father and remember too that we are constantly to love one another and that command comes again and again and again in the new testament by this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one to another said the lord jesus and where you find in churches where christians have been quarreling and fallen out with each other that is a terrible thing a false testimony if we do hurt each other sadly we do from time to time we have to go to our fellow of christian we have to apologize we have to make up as soon as possible we are to renew those fellowship that relationship we are to love one another and i have known we actually i was talking to pastor john we actually disciplined the lady in our church who had fallen out with another lady over something she'd heard and she refused to be reconciled or forgive we had to excommunicate that lady because the other one was quite prepared to apologize or anything she'd done and to meet but this one would not and you hear of terrible things i heard of a youth worker had a punch up with a pastor in the front of the church in one church i don't really know where they stood but things like this and that must never be we're to love one another love truly love an example is the love of the lord jesus to us now what was your earthly father so those of you are old what is your earthly father like we've had some problems with this you see in the philippines we've had we remember a lady who'd been badly abused by her father and she hated him and it was so hard for her to understand really what a father should be the loving of a heavenly father and trying to explain and understand and help her to come to a greater understanding of the love of god that he's nothing like your father here in this world so let's never compare our fathers to the father in that way because any father in this world as we all know all of us have failed in some way or another to do that which is right at times no no our earthly fathers are not the pattern we look here in scripture and we see the love of god as we read the scriptures as we meditate and god reveals himself to us and has revealed himself to us in his son above all the lord jesus christ so don't put away if you have had a terrible image of a father put it away don't let that crowd in and cloud your vision and understanding of our god our heavenly father the other thing i'd like to say is this we're commanded to imitate

our god in chapter five of ephesians and verse one it says therefore be imitators of god as beloved children and children do imitate their fathers do they not little ones particularly they copy their dads and things like that you know it's so much so that's what they do we do imitate god peter says the same in 1 peter chapter 1 but he says it in more detail does he not verse 14 as obedient children do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance but like the holy one who called you be holy yourselves in all your behavior because it is written you shall be holy for i am holy we're to be like our god he is holy and we've got by his grace by his strength we're to grow in holiness we're to grow in our love our compassion our concern our concern in righteousness in how we live and how we deal and we know we so often fail and we have to come and ask him for forgiveness but that is how we're to look unto him to look to our god look to our father look to his son the lord jesus we must honor him and be christians in this world we're to be that and we know

remember what the lord jesus christ said let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and what do glorify you know and glorify your father who is in heaven they see what god has done in our lives and glorify him and that we can be bright and shining lights to point others to our god and to his son the lord jesus christ that is what we're to be so let us let me ask you and ask myself again are we living as true children of god are you living as a child of god do you realize the great privileges and the wonder of it but are we seeking above all in our lives to glorify him above all the great privileges we have the personal relationship thankful are we just playing of being christians playing do we love our fellow believers look around do you love do you seek to love some some god put some people in our congregations who are difficult to love i'm not going to mention any names in our congregation it may get back to them but we do have a lady she talks and talks and talks my poor wife sits there and she says oh no she's coming again but i love her she love her and we she my wife sits there and listens to her yes yes that's all my wife can get in yes and you get those don't you the lord gives you such people and to love them because she wants somebody to talk to she wants it and that's it and we're to love the person yeah we do we're to be like that do we love our fellow believers are they our best friends are they believers they should be and do we see each of them as our brothers and sisters in christ people with whom we are going to spend eternity and finally again i've been speaking to believers what about unbelievers of course i don't know all of you by any means where are you there's a verse i want to say this very carefully and listen to it in john his first letter

[40:07] chapter 3 verse 10 by this the children of god and the children of the devil are obvious anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of god nor the one who does not love his brother the devil has children who follow him they may not say they're the children of the devil they may not say they're anything like that they're just ordinary people but there may be some here this morning who are actually children of the devil at this moment you're doing the devil's will some of you young people perhaps some of you older people who've been coming here for years but you you're not truly looking to god he's not your father you don't trust in him in the lord jesus how do we know the children of the devil they don't practice righteousness we i'm sure you have some in the states i gather you have some certainly in chicago we have corrupt officials yes when a policeman stops me well i have to i talk fast in english i speak togala but i talk fast in english because many a policeman is wanting his palm crossed in the philippines corrupt officials there's a man there was a policeman waits up a road regularly and stopping all the jeepneys and i know he's getting his tongue for that day from the jeep so he doesn't arrest him or doesn't cause him a problem loses his money but do you know it says this that if do you lie do you tell lies because what did jesus say about those who tell lies they're doing the work of their father the devil who was the first liar satan the devil yes and if you lie dear friend if you've been telling lies you young people telling lies to your parents telling lies at school some of you lying on your on your job at work perhaps lying to your wife or to your husband that's the work of the devil work of the devil where is the devil heading to the lake of fire through eternal damnation i don't know you but i'm sure there may be some here this morning that that's what road you are on but god is merciful turn unto him cry unto him for forgiveness forgiveness of your sins that he may have mercy upon you because he's a merciful god cry unto him before it's too late for we never know when we'll be called into the presence of the living god and then we give account for everything let us pray our gracious and eternal god we thank you for your grace and mercy and for your love we marvel that you love our sinful creatures and that you have redeemed a people unto yourself through your dear son the lord jesus christ and made them your children oh god how wonderful how gracious how merciful how good help us to do that which is pleasing in your sight and to live as your children but we pray also for any here boy girl man woman whoever they might be who are not yet in your kingdom have mercy upon them and draw them unto yourself and cause them to cry unto you for mercy that they might find grace and forgiveness and mercy

and know that you are a loving heavenly father so we commit ourselves to you for this day bless this day we thank you that we can be here to worship you together and we praise you and bless you and thank you in the precious name of the lord jesus christ amen may may