

Ephesians 1:11-14 Why are we saved?

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Preacher: Rev Trevor Kane

[0 : 0 0] And then please to Ephesians chapter 1, Ephesians chapter 1, Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus chapter 1. And tonight we're going to read verses 11 through 14, verses 11 through 14 of Ephesians chapter 1.

And we're going to think about these verses together tonight. Ephesians chapter 1, beginning to read at verse 11. This is the word of God.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.

So that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it. To the praise of his glory. Amen. Amen.

[1 : 0 8] Let's word to the prophecy of Joel. Prophecy of Joel chapter 2. As we see in Ephesians chapter 1, the verses that we read. Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit was given as a guarantee of our inheritance.

Was given as a down payment on our inheritance. In Joel chapter 2 here, we read the prophet Joel promising, the Lord promising, that the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all nations.

On all flesh. Joel chapter 2. I'm beginning to read at verse 1. Joel chapter 2. Joel chapter 2.

Joel chapter 2. I'm beginning to read at verse 1. This is the word of the Lord. Blow a trumpet in Zion. Sound an alarm on my holy mountain.

Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble. For the day of the Lord is coming. It is near. A day of darkness and gloom. A day of clouds and thick darkness. Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains.

[2 : 2 0] A great and powerful people. Their like has never been before. Nor will be again after them. Through the years of all generations. Fire devours before them.

And behind them a flame burns. The land is like the garden of Eden before them. But behind them a desolate wilderness. And nothing escapes them. Their appearance is like the appearance of horses.

And like war horses they run. As with the rumbling of chariots they leap on the tops of mountains. Like the crackling of a flame of fire devouring the stubble. Like a powerful army drawn up for battle.

Before them peoples are in anguish. All faces grow pale. Like warriors they charge. Like soldiers they scale the wall. They march each on his way. They do not swear from their paths.

They do not jostle one another. Each marches in his path. They burst through the weapons and are not halted. They leap upon the city. They run upon the walls. They climb up into the houses.

- [3 : 24] They enter through the windows like a thief. The earth quakes before them. The heavens tremble. The sun and moon are darkened. And the stars withdraw their shining.
- The Lord utters his voice before his army. For his camp is exceedingly great. He who executes his word is powerful. For the day of the Lord is a great and very awesome.
- Who can endure it? Yet even now declares the Lord. Return to me with all your heart. With fasting. With weeping.
- And with mourning. And rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God. For he is gracious and merciful. Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- And he relents over disaster. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent. And leave a blessing behind him. A grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God.
- [4 : 21] Blow the trumpet in Zion. Consecrate a fast. Call a solemn assembly. Gather the people. Consecrate the congregation. Assemble the elders. Gather the children. Even nursing infants.
- Let the bridegroom leave his room. And the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord. Weep. And say, spare your people, O Lord.
- And make not your heritage or reproach. A byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples? Where is their God? Then the Lord became jealous for his land.
- And had pity on his people. The Lord answered and said to his people. Behold. I am sending to you grain, wine and oil. And you will be satisfied. And I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.
- I will remove the northerner far from you. And drive him into a parched and desolate land. His vanguard into the eastern sea. And his rearguard into the western sea. The stench and foul smell of him will rise.
- [5 : 23] For he has done great things. Fear not, O land. Be glad and rejoice. For the Lord has done great things. Fear not, you beasts of the field. For the pastures of the wilderness are green.
- The tree bears its fruit. The fig tree and vine give their full yield. Be glad, O children of Zion. And rejoice in the Lord your God. For he has given the early rain for your vindication.
- He has poured down for you abundant rain. The early and the latter rain as before. The threshing floors shall be full of grain. The vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
- I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten. The hopper, the destroyer and the cutter. My great army which I sent among you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied.
- And praise the name of the Lord your God who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel.
- [6 : 22] And that I am the Lord your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame. And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.
- Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams. And your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days. I will pour out my spirit.
- And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth. Blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood. Before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls in the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape. As the Lord has said. And among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Amen. Amen. Let's turn then please to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1 and these three verses. Verses 11 through 14 of Ephesians chapter 1.

[7 : 33] One of the questions that I find myself asking most often these days is. Why are you doing that? The strangest occasion of late was coming down from the shower one day. To discover one of the boys sitting at the bottom of the stairs in a laundry basket.

So naturally I said to him. Well why are you sitting in a laundry basket? Is there some sort of crisis that has arisen that requires us all to sit in a laundry basket? And his response was.

There was a cushion in it. Now who put the cushion in the basket? I do not know. But at least there was a rationale. At least there was a thought process that went into him sitting at the bottom of the stairs in a laundry basket.

And the question that Paul seeks to answer tonight. The question that Paul is addressing tonight in this section of his letter to the church in Ephesus.

Is the question really why did God save us? Why did God choose to act in the way that he did? Why did God save us?

[8 : 36] And as we are going to find out as we look at these three verses. The reason that God saved us is simply for his own glory. It is simply for his own praise. Now if that were us who said that.

If that were us who acted for our own praise and for our own glory. Then of course that would be wrong wouldn't it? That would be self-serving, self-seeking arrogance. But God is the creator of the universe.

God is the sustainer of the universe. And when Paul says here that he did it for his own glory. That's the highest praise that there can be. That if you are in Christ tonight.

God saved you for his glory. God saved you to display his glory to a watching world. God saved you to a watching world. It's not a self-seeking, self-glorifying, arrogant act.

But it's done to the glory of God. Think about our own shorter catechism. The Westminster Shorter Catechism. What's man's chief end? That's the first question.

[9 : 41] What's the purpose of mankind? Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Man's chief end is to glorify God.

Man's salvation, if you like, is to glorify God. We want to think about three things from these three verses. See three things tonight.

Firstly, we want to see that we are predestined to his glory. We are predestined to his glory. Secondly, then, we want to see how we are in Christ to his glory.

And then thirdly, we are guaranteed to his glory. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to us as that down payment to his glory.

So firstly, then, we want to think about how we are predestined to his glory. Predestined to his glory. And we see that in verse 11. Verse 11 of Ephesians 1.

[10 : 43] As we finished Ephesians 1 last week, as we thought about verse 10, we saw how the ultimate plan of God was to unite all things in Jesus Christ.

When the fullness of time comes, God will unite all things by Christ. United by his life, his death, and his resurrection. And this again, in verse 11, as we come to it, is one of those times when our English translations don't really do us too many favours.

Because this whole opening section, this whole sort of psalm, hymn of praise to God, if you like, is one long sentence. It's an overflow of praise to God.

And as we come to verse 11 tonight, we see that it's a new paragraph in our English translation. But that misses out the fact that this is all one long sentence. This is all just one thing that's pouring out of the Apostle Paul as he writes to the church in Ephesus.

And as we come to verse 11, we notice that Paul begins, it's in him. Now, in who is the question maybe we want to ask tonight. If we were coming to it fresh, we'd have no idea.

[11 : 55] But of course we are. And it's in Christ. It's in Christ we have obtained an inheritance. Now, we all know what an inheritance is, don't we?

It's something that's passed on to us. Something that's given to us. Which isn't ours by right. Which isn't normally ours. So as we come to verse 11, we notice Paul telling us that it's in Jesus Christ that we have this inheritance.

It's in Jesus Christ that we have something given to us that isn't normally ours. Of course, normally in the normal course of things, we obtain an inheritance, don't we?

From someone close to us. From a family member or perhaps a very close friend. Despite the many emails, to the contrary, I'm yet to find someone who has died in Nigeria and left me a vast sum of money.

I'm also yet to find someone who has been a general in the Nigerian army who has left me land for charitable purposes. I don't know these people. They don't exist.

[13 : 04] It's only in Christ tonight that we have obtained this inheritance. It's only in Christ tonight that we can have that which is not ours by birth. Because what is ours by birth?

What comes to us naturally as human beings? What is our inheritance by birth? Well, it's sin and death, isn't it? That is what we are by birth.

Sinners. But we have this inheritance tonight in Jesus Christ. This forgiveness of sins. This assurance of eternal life.

We have that which is not ours by right. It's not ours by birth. But it's ours by relationship with Jesus Christ.

It's ours by faith and trust in Him. It's He who gives us that righteousness which is foreign to us.

[14 : 06] It's He who gives us that right relationship with God which is not ours by right. So we have obtained this inheritance then. We have been given that which is not ours by right.

Notice again what Paul says. In Him we have obtained an inheritance. What? Having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to His will.

We have been predestined tonight. We have received this inheritance. We have been given this salvation. We have been given this righteousness which is not ours by right.

Quite simply because it's the will of God. That we should receive it. Quite simply because it's the plan and purpose of God that we should receive it.

Most of you probably know that Suzanne, my wife's granny, died a little while ago. Just over eight, nine months ago. There was some stuff that was left to us in her will. Some stuff that was hers that was given to us.

[15 : 11] Now why did we get her copy of the blue book of the practice of the Free Church of Scotland? Quite simply because it was her will that I should have it.

It was her will that it was given to me. Why are you in Christ tonight? Why did God save you tonight? Why have your sins been forgiven tonight?

Why do you have this salvation, this inheritance tonight? Quite simply because God willed it. And because God works all things according to his will.

But notice friends that this doesn't change our responsibility to believe. This doesn't remove our responsibility to believe. One of the sort of oft quoted criticisms of predestination, of Calvinism, of all of these things.

Is that the saved are going to be saved no matter what. So we have no responsibility. If God wants someone to be saved then they're going to be saved. If God, as we use the language of Paul here.

[16 : 23] If God wills someone to be saved then they're going to be saved no matter what. Rather it's our responsibility to believe. It's our responsibility to make the most of our salvation.

It's our responsibility to work out our salvation with fear. And trembling as Paul puts it in another place. Let's think about the reverse almost.

And we'll hopefully see that a little bit more clearly. Think about some of the sin that we read of in scripture. Think about those men who killed Jesus Christ.

They made the decision. What does God tell us? That they are responsible for that decision that they made. They're responsible for their sin. Although God allowed it to happen. We are responsible for believing.

We are responsible for making the most of our salvation as Christians tonight. We are not in Christ tonight by accident.

[17 : 30] We don't have faith in Christ this evening as some sort of quirk of upbringing or circumstance. We have not received this inheritance tonight by accident.

But rather by the will and plan and purpose of God. You are in Christ tonight because God willed it.

What a reassuring thought that is. To know that God has chosen. God has called you to be conformed to the image of his son. You see if we're honest.

There are many days when we may not want to choose God. If we're honest. In your heart of hearts. There may be days when you don't want to choose God. When life is difficult.

When being a Christian seems to cost too much. And yet on those days you can cast yourself back. And know that you're in Christ because it's the will of God.

[18 : 37] Our faith doesn't depend. Our standing in Christ doesn't depend. On the fact that we choose God. But rather that God chose us. We are predestined this evening for his glory.

To showcase his grace and mercy to the world. Secondly then.

We want to think. About how we are in Christ. In Christ. To his glory. And we see that in verse 12. And as we move into verse 12.

We notice that Paul begins to make. A distinction. Paul begins to kind of. Draw out a distinction. Doesn't he? Verse 12. What does he say? So that we. Who were the first to hope in Christ.

Might be to the praise. Of his glory. So that we. Who were the first to hope in Christ. Now what's. The distinction. What is it that Paul's drawing.

[19 : 35] Out here. Some people will read this. And they'll say that what. Paul's kind of. The distinction that Paul's making here. Is the distinction between the first generation Christians.

If you like. And those who would read it later. So. You know. Let's count ourselves. In this group. And that's the distinction. Between the first generation Christians. And those who would.

Read it later. There might be something in that. But I'm not convinced. It has to be said. As we read our Bibles. We always think about. What's the original context.

What did the. The Ephesian readers. As they read his papyrus. As the letter was read to them. What did they understand by verse 12. When Paul said. So that we. Well Paul was writing this letter.

To a group of Gentile believers. Writing this. This letter. To a group of first generation believers. believers. And here Paul is drawing the distinction. Between the Jews. And the Gentiles.

[20 : 34] By and large. The Jews were the first to believe in Christ. They were the first ones. To recognize who he was. And what he came to do. And when we think about it. That makes sense of course.

Doesn't it? The Jews were the ones. Who knew all of the promises. The Jews were the ones. Who were waiting for the Messiah. The Jews were the ones. Who were waiting for. The fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7.

That we read this morning. The Jews were the ones. Waiting for the fulfillment. Of Isaiah 53. The Jews were the ones. Waiting for the fulfillment. Of Joel chapter 2. They were the ones.

Who were hoping. Who were waiting. Who were expecting. The Messiah to come. Now of course. Some rejected him. Of course. Some turned away from him. Of course. Some wanted nothing to do with him.

And of course. Ultimately. Some of them had him killed. And yet some believed. And it was they. Said Paul. Who were the first.

[21 : 29] To hope in Christ. It was they. Who set their hope. On Jesus first. I'm sure most of you.

Are familiar. This evening. With the TV show. Dragon's Den. It's not a show I watch. It's not a. A show I particularly like. But there's a concept to it. Isn't there? You know that an entrepreneur.

Has this latest great idea. His idea is going to be. The idea that makes millions of pounds. So they come on to the show. And they pitch their idea. To these dragons.

These five investors. And the whole premise of the show. Is that the investment. Is so irresistible. That the investment. Will make so much money. That the dragon.

Wants to get in early. To secure their share. The Jews. Were the first. To get in on Christ. If you like. They were the ones.

[22 : 24] Who got in. Early. They were the first. To hope. In Christ. And note again. That this was done. To the praise.

Of his glory. At the very end. Of verse 12. They hoped in Christ. To the praise. Of his glory. How. How.

How. The Jews. Were the ones. Who were waiting. That's what we've just said. The ones. Who'd been longing. Looking for centuries. For King David's. Greater son. To arise. Looking for the suffering servant.

Looking for. The Messiah. And now that he's here. Now that he'd come. Can you imagine.

The rejoicing. Can you imagine. The sense of. Praise. That there was. Among some of the Jews. I want to draw out. Two quick. Quick examples.

[23 : 22] That we see in scripture. We're going to come to them. In a few weeks time. In our gospel of Luke. Think about the prophetess Anna. That lady. Who lived.

In the temple courts. And when she sees Christ. She begins. To praise God. Think of that other man. That we meet in that same passage.

That old man. Simeon. Who when he sees the Christ. What does he say? Thank you Lord. That your servant. Can now depart in peace. The praise.

Of God. For the coming of the Messiah. The praise of God. That the Christ had come. The praise of God. That all of Israel. Had been waiting for. Fulfilled.

In Christ. How we need to look. And pray for the evangelization.

[24 : 24] Of our friends. The Jews. We must never forget. That they are the vine. And we as Gentiles. Are the vine. That have been engrafted.

The Jews here. Who were the first to believe. The first to hope. In Christ. The Jews here. Who are the Old Testament. People of God. And how we need to pray.

For organizations. Like Christian Witness. To Israel. That seek to make Jews aware. Of the person. And work. Of Christ. How we need to pray.

That God would once again. Do a mighty work. Amongst his ancient people. That the many would turn. And put their hope in Christ. And that all would be done.

For his glory. We've seen then. How we're predestined. To his glory. We've seen that we're. In Christ. To his glory.

[25 : 22] And then thirdly. Finally. See how we're guaranteed. To his glory. Guaranteed to his glory. And we see that in verses. Verses 13. And 14. I think we see.

That Paul is talking about the Jews. In verse 12. As we get to verse 13. Because verse 12. What is it? We. Who were the first to hope in Christ. And then by the time we get to verse 13.

What does he say? In him you also. You also. Ephesian believers. You also. Gentile believers. You who are in Christ also.

When you heard the word of truth. When the gospel was. Preached to you. When you came to believe in him. You were also sealed. With the same promised Holy Spirit. As we study the book of Galatians.

More and more and more. We're going to see. That that's one of the key things. One of the key themes. That come out. Time and time and time again. Paul's going to remind. These believers. That they're now.

[26 : 24] One in Christ. That in Christ. There is. No Jew. And Gentile. That in Christ. All are one. That in Christ. The middle wall. Of hostility.

Has been broken down. And he's showing them here. In verses 12 and 13. How that's true. Even at the beginning of his letter. We hoped in Christ first.

He says. Verse 12. But you also hoped in the same Christ. Verse 13. You also were sealed. With the same Holy Spirit. Verse 13. We are all.

In Christ. And verses 13 and 14. Are very much the outworking of that. All have received. The same Holy Spirit. All have received.

The same promised. Holy Spirit. And therefore. All are equal. The Jews might be the Old Testament people of God. But they still needed to hope in Christ.

[27 : 22] They might be the Old Testament people of God. But they still needed the outpouring of God's Spirit. The Gentiles might be the engrafted branch. But they need to hope in Christ.

They might be the engrafted branch. But they still need. And still share the same. Holy Spirit. And there's a challenge in that.

Isn't there to us. To see all Christians. All those who are in Christ. As those who have been sealed. With the same Holy Spirit. For the Jews.

It would have been unthinkable. At one time. That the Gentiles would be sealed. With the Holy Spirit of God. It would have been beyond their ability. To see and understand.

How God could save. The Gentile. For us. I'm not sure who. It might be. I've met some interesting characters.

- [28 : 26] Over the years. I've met some interesting Christians. Some who would fit in well here. And some. I'm not sure that they would. Some who I've got on well with.
- And others. That I've struggled with. But the reality is. That they'd all believed. In the same Christ. That they'd all been sealed.
- With the same Holy Spirit. And therefore. My calling is to treat them. As brothers and sisters. My calling is to love them. As brothers. And sisters in Christ.
- Paul continues this theme. In the Holy Spirit. In verse 14. He assures us.
- That this Holy Spirit. Is the guarantee. Of our inheritance. It's the guarantee. Of the promise. Until we actually acquire. Possession of it. It's the down payment.
- [29 : 23] If you like. To the future praise. Of his glory. The idea behind. A guarantee.
- As Paul uses it here. Is the idea. Of leaving a deposit. It's a down payment. It's a promise. That there's more to come. You know.
- If you drive past. The car dealerships. In town. You'll see. Emblazoned on the side. Of the cars. Only. \$269 deposit. And \$269 a month. You go to buy a house.
- You'll put down. A deposit. And then pay so much. Every month. The deposit's the guarantee. That there's more to come. The deposit's the. Initial payment. That proves.
- There's more to come. It's the. The guarantee. That there's more to come. And the Holy Spirit. Here serves.
- [30 : 20] Paul says. As this. Guarantee. That there's more to come. That there's an inheritance. Waiting for us. In the future.
- As Christians. An eternity. Spent with God. And with fellow believers. Now the danger.
- When we use terms like that. Is that it can seem to. To denigrate the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It can seem to. To put down. His ministry.
- And somehow make him less. God. That he's just. The guarantee. That he's just the. The down payment. Of the better things to come. But rather.
- This is the ministry of the Spirit. It's to seal. And to keep us. That his ministry involves. Opening our eyes. His ministry involves.
- [31 : 17] Drawing us to Christ. His ministry involves. Uniting us by faith. To Christ. And keeping us. Till that day. When we receive the fullness.
- Of the promise. And it's a lovely thought. To finish with this evening. Isn't it? See we can all look back.
- At times in our lives. At least I hope we can. I hope we can all look back. At times in our lives. When we felt. The Spirit moving within us. Might be times.
- When we've listened to. A particular preacher. In a particular sermon. Where the Spirit moves. And stirred our hearts. Might be to during times.
- Of. Worship. As you sang praise to God. With brothers and sisters. We can all look back. I hope to those times. When the Holy Spirit. Warmed and moved our hearts.
- [32 : 16] But think on that experience. Tonight. However deeply it moved you. And I hopefully say this. With reverence and respect. However deeply it moved you. That is just a down payment.
- Of what is to come. That is just a deposit. Of that which will one day be ours. That day when we're gathered.
- Around the throne. Of the Lamb. With people from every tribe. And tongue and nation. Worshipping the Lamb. That day when faith.

Will give way to sight. A day when the Lord returns. And takes us to be with Christ. Truly tonight we pray.

Come. Lord Jesus. Truly tonight we long for the day. When the deposit reaches its conclusion.

[33 : 17] We have all that is promised. By the sealed Holy Spirit. Amen.