

**“Blessed, Chosen, and Destined”**

*God...has **blessed** us ...just as God **chose** us ...and **destined** us....  
I pray that...you may know what is the **hope** to which he has called you,  
what are the **riches** of his glorious inheritance...,  
and what is the immeasurable greatness of his **power** for us who believe....*

In most of his letters, Paul begins with a short proclamation of praise  
and moves quickly into more practical advice.

But in Ephesians he begins with this hymn of praise  
and continues with it throughout half of the book!

The words are so filled with heavenly rapture  
that it’s hard to bring it down to earth and grasp its meaning with our logical minds,  
but let me try.

There are 3 verbs that Paul used in the first part of the chapter which we just heard read.  
Those verbs are **blessed**, **chosen**, and **destined**.

**First of all,**

**Paul says that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing that heaven contains.**

So imagine that in the spiritual realm –

not heaven sometime in the future, but the spiritual realm in the here and now –

there is the vast storehouse of spiritual blessings –

wisdom, insight, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, awe,

love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control,

grace, forgiveness, praise, gratitude, and on and on –

and you and I have been given 24/7 access to this treasure store!

Any spiritual blessing that we need is available to us just for the asking – here and now!

**Second, Paul says that we have been chosen before the foundation of the world.**

Our being here is no accident.

Each one of us has been created as a unique being by the God of all creation.

Each one of us has been called to play our role in the grandest drama ever written.

It’s a kind of spontaneous theatre for which we are not given scripts to read verbatim,

but rather we are given a rigorous narrative structure

and then asked to improvise our own lines as we relate to the other characters,

all of us under the director’s guidance.

**And third, Paul says we’ve been destined.**

We aren’t in this play to do our own random thing,

but as part of the narrative that we’ve been handed

we’ve been given a destination to which we are expected to head

through our words and actions and our relationships with other characters.

**We’re blessed, we’re chosen, and we’re destined.**

**But there’s more!**

Paul continues with this prayer for the church:

*“I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,  
may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him,  
so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened,  
you may know what is the hope to which he has called you,  
what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints,  
and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe,  
according to the working of his great power.*

*God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead  
and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,  
far above all rule and authority and power and dominion,  
and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.  
And he has put all things under his feet & has made him the head over all things for the church,  
which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”*

**And from this let me highlight 3 nouns - *hope, riches, and power* –  
that relate to the 3 verbs – *destined, blessed, and chosen* – we’ve looked at.**

**Paul prays that we “may know...the hope to which God has called” us.**

So think of your life as a journey, with hope as your destination –  
not just a generic vague hopeful feeling,  
but a unique and specific hope to which he has called you as an individual,  
one that Paul prays that God would reveal to you –  
not just through the normal logic of your mind,  
but through divine revelation to your heart and spirit.

And the destiny of your life cannot be separated from the destiny of anyone else’s life,  
since we are all on the same journey, part of the same grand play.

***Hope is the destination of our journey,***

***& to get us there we have been given 2 things to equip us along the way: *riches & power.****

Think of riches as supplies you will need on a trip.

Like the food, shelter, clothing, and companions that one needs for a physical trip,  
there are spiritual supplies one needs for one’s spiritual journey.

Again these are the blessings I mentioned before,

the 7 gifts of the Spirit, the 9 fruits of the Spirit, plus others mentioned in this chapter –  
like redemption, forgiveness, and grace.

**Riches are the supplies we will need on the journey towards our destined hope,  
but power is what moves us forward in the journey.**

It’s not enough to have the supplies; we must be moving forward.

And Paul explains what that power is that moves us ahead step by step.

He says that it is the same power that God used to raise Christ from the dead  
and seat him beside God to rule above everything

with all authority and power and dominion, now and forever.

He goes on to remind us that this rule extends over the church and over each one of us.

He proclaims that God WILL accomplish all things according to the divine purpose.

And he explains that the way God does this is through the Holy Spirit working in our lives.

So what Paul is saying is this:

In this life journey that you are on, God has provided you with 3 things:

- 1. God has destined your life  
for a particular hope which has been planted within you;**
- 2. God has blessed you  
with an inexhaustible treasure house of riches to supply you on your journey; and**
- 3. God has not only chosen you for this journey  
but empowered you for it, giving you access through the Holy Spirit  
to the same power that raised Jesus from the dead,  
the same power that brings everything into creation,  
the same power that can do absolutely anything .**

God has given each one of us our part to play in the great drama of life,  
but we are only single characters in a play  
that involves every other person of every time and every place.

In order for us to fulfill our improvised roles to the best of our ability,  
we must work within the bounds of the plot

which Paul says is about living for the praise of God's glory.

And the way we do that is to come to know God in an ever deepening way.

**As I close, let me reiterate the good news:**

- 1. God has destined your life for a particular hope which has been planted within you;**
- 2. God has blessed you with an inexhaustible supply of riches for your journey; and**
- 3. God has chosen and empowered you for this journey with the power of the living God.**

**And as you journey through your life this week, this is my prayer for you:**

**May you be drawn into deeper relationship with God each day.**

**May God reveal to you your unique role in the story of the world.**

**May God supply you with every resource you need along the way.**

**And may God move you forward ever closer to the vision to which you are called. Amen**