**January 22, 2017 “Predestination and Election” Ephesians 1: 3-14**

**Ephesians 1: 4-6a**

On Friday evening of last week, we showed a DVD called “October Baby.” It was a story of young woman who was searching for answers regarding who she was and why she is the way she is. I often think this is also a concern for many Christians who have questions like: “Who am I am?” “Why was I born into a time like this?” Or “What is my purpose and what does God want me to do?”

These types of questions can lead us to an identity crisis as Christians. Do you know how many times people have told me in conversation that because they cannot sing, preach or teach a Bible Study that they feel they are really of not much value to the Kingdom of God?

I think Paul here in this passage from which we are studying this issue of Christian identity, begins to explain to us what it means to be a part of the body of Christ. Remember, that is the main emphasis of this book; the uniqueness of the universal Church which makes up the body of Christ. (Ephesians 1: 22-23)

The main text, which we touched on last week, which is verse 3-14, is really one long sentence. It is as though once Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit begins to contemplate all the blessings of God, cannot stop listing and recording all that is contained in the praise that belongs to God the Father who has blessed us with “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places…in Christ.”

This long sentence, verse 3-14, can be broken into three sections.

1. Vs 4-6a…God the Father
2. Vs 6b-12…God the Son
3. Vs 13-14…God the Spirit

It can also be broken out into three categories:

1. Vs 4-6a…eternity past…predestination and election…Father
2. Vs 6b-12…present day…redemption and forgiveness…Son
3. Vs 13-14…future blessing…inheritance…Holy Spirit of promise

There is also one important factor that we cannot overlook and it is mentioned three times in this one sentence

1. Vs 6a…to the praise of His glory
2. Vs 12…to the praise of His glory
3. Vs 14…to the praise of His glory

So, question that remains is this one, “if this is such an important passage for us to comprehend, why does Holy Spirit start off with such a controversial doctrine like “predestination?”

1. Ephesians 1: 4
   1. He chose us in Him
      1. In Whom?
      2. In Christ
   2. When?
      1. Before the foundation of the world???
      2. Before there was anything but God
         1. Revelation 13: 8…speaking of the Anti-Christ
         2. Revelation 17: 8
   3. Did God choose before the foundation of the world those who would spend eternity with Him and those who would not?
      1. Not a matter of opinion
      2. What does God’s Word teach?
      3. Are we to believe God’s Word or our pet doctrines?
      4. What does that do to your identity as a Christian to know
      5. That the Eternal God has chosen you…you to live and reign with Him forever?????
      6. Not only you…
         1. Isaiah 45: 4…Israel
         2. I Timothy 5: 21…angels
         3. I Peter 2: 6…Jesus Christ…the elected Cornerstone
      7. Not according to works
         1. II Timothy 1: 9…before the world began
         2. Romans 9: 11…purpose of God’s election might stand
         3. Romans 9: 16-18
      8. He has chosen you!!!!
         1. II Thessalonians 2: 13…from the beginning
2. Free will
   1. Does the Bible teach that man has “free will?”
      1. The short answer is “No.”
      2. Man has a will
         1. But it is always under bondage to sin
         2. It is never free
   2. Does man have a choice or is he just an automaton?
      1. Revelation 22: 17
         1. Who is the “whosoever will?”
         2. Is that anybody????
            1. The invitation is to all
      2. John 6: 37-40
         1. Every one that seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life
      3. Matthew 11: 28-30
         1. Come unto Me
            1. Is that invitation only to the elect?
            2. Or is it to everyone?
      4. How often has Jesus called men to Himself?
         1. Matthew 23: 37
            1. How often would I have gathered you
            2. But you would not

You would not…come

1. Where does that leave us?
   1. Does the Bible teach predestination and election?
      1. Absolutely
   2. Does the Bible teach that any man can come to Christ?
      1. Absolutely
   3. Are those two views in contradiction to one another?
      1. Absolutely
   4. So how am I supposed to resolve this?
      1. You’re not to resolve it
      2. Neither am I
         1. We are to take God’s Word as it is written and presented
   5. But I don’t understand?
      1. How did God create the heavens and the earth?
      2. How did Jesus command the wind and waves to cease?
      3. How did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead?
      4. How did Jesus ascend into heaven?

Maybe we should just sit back and marvel that the God who created all things, has chosen you to spend eternity with Him? Out of all the people he could have chosen…He chose you. This thought alone will lift you to a new plateau and allow you to live your life… “to the praise of His glory”.