

Chosen in Christ

Eph 1:4: We were chosen “in Christ” before the foundation of the world. Before creation, chosen by the Father to be in Christ! This is another of the amazing benefits we have in the new covenant. To be ‘in Christ’!

What does it mean to be ‘in Christ’? It denotes our position – where He is, we are. It defines our privileges – what He is, we are. It describes our possessions – what He has, we share. It determines our practice – what He does, we do.

What does it mean to be ‘chosen’? Well it starts off with, by whom you are chosen. The significance of being chosen is always related to the status of the person doing the choosing. For example, as a child when you stood as one of the group of kids in front of two team leaders who were taking turns to choose the players in their teams, as you waited your turn to be picked, you silently wished that ‘Big Johnny’ would pick you because he was the best all-rounder in the sport and you knew if you were on his team you would be on the winning side. We all want to be on the winning side!

You were chosen by the Father! There is no one greater to do the choosing! Almighty God, Creator of the heavens and the earth. He chose us to be in Christ. We’re on the winning team! The winning team is the church over which Christ is head!

Our Father in Heaven has only ever had one plan and that is the one He set in place before the foundation of the world. Before He did any creative work of building our earthly home and creating man. His plan was to have a large family, birthed by Him, containing His Divine nature, who would come to maturity and represent Him. This collective group He would call the “church”, the “body” of which His Son would be “head”.

So ‘in Christ’, partaking of His fullness and every spiritual blessing heaven has to offer, we, the church are to walk in His holiness and purity and fill this world with His presence and His love. That’s who we are and that’s why we are here. That is how it was planned before the foundation of the world, that is how it was in the early church and that is how our Father wants it right now.

There’s more! Let’s examine the next of the new covenant benefits that is ours.

Accepted and Adopted as sons

Eph 1:5-6 ... *“in love He predestined us to 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.*

You have a purpose for living. The Father’s desire from eternity past for you is that you live for the praise of His glory.

Eph 1:5: Predestined to adoption as sons. Here and in verse 11 we meet a misunderstood word if ever there was one! ‘Predestined’. The truth is that it is only ever used in relation to people who are born again. Nowhere in the Scriptures are we taught that people are predestined to hell, or to heaven for that matter, because the word is only ever used to refer to the born again. The word translated ‘predestined’ would have equally well, and probably better, have been translated ‘*to design definitely beforehand*’. Now all it means here is that it was God’s definite design way back

before He created man that He would place His Seed, Christ, into the man He would create and then that man would grow into the full stature of Christ. That meant there would be a maturing, a growth from child to mature son that would take place in man. That's what predestined to 'adoption as sons' means.

The words 'predestined' (v5, 11) and 'chosen' (v4) are used here to describe what God planned or purposed before the foundation of the world. Before man was even created and before the entry of sin onto the scene. It was the entry of sin, which occurred after man had been created and disobeyed God, which separated man from God. Man then need to be redeemed and even that had been provided for before the creation of the world. These words, 'chosen' and 'predestined', have nothing to do with people being designated to go to hell. We are not predestined to hell or heaven.

God could have made us creatures that could not have sinned and failed Him. We have examples of creatures He created in the animal world that never deviate from the purpose of their being. For example, the Mourning Dove, if it loses its mate, remains widowed for the rest of its life. God made these birds that way, that was His design for them, and in the same way He could have made mankind so that they could not have deviated from the paths of righteousness. But His decision to create man and woman who would be capable of giving Him loyal obedience, loving service and voluntary devotion meant that He had to create man and woman as free agents; people with free wills that could also turn away from Him and disobey him if they wanted to do so. Otherwise we would have been made puppets, with no freedom in our love, devotion, reverence, loyalty and affection. God wanted mankind to willingly submit and to offer Him spontaneous, voluntary love and devotion. When sin entered the scene, the Saviour was given and man was redeemed through the work of the cross, and God can, in Christ, present us in His glorious presence holy and without blame. He says to mankind, whosoever will may come. Whoever believes on the name of the Lord will be saved. It's not His will that any should perish but that all should be saved.

If we look at Rom 8:29 ... *"for whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son"* ... This is not God, from eternity past, saying, "This one goes to heaven and that one goes to hell". This is simply telling me that when I have placed my trust in Christ and believed in Him and received Him as my Saviour, I may know with assurance, on God's authority, that it is definite and settled forever that I will be conformed to the image of Christ. As Paul says in Ephesians, I will "learn Christ" (4:20) and will mature into *"the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ"* (4:13).

(An extract from, "Ephesians – knowing and walking in the authority and richness of life in Christ", notes for your edification by Geoffrey Bull)

See also Rom 6:10; 1 Tim 4:10; Titus 2:11; Heb 7:27 – Christ's provision for ALL

1 Pet 3:18 ... "for Christ also died for sin, once for **all**, the just for the unjust"

2 Pet 3:9 ... "The Lord is ...patient ...not wishing for any to perish but for **all** to come to repentance."

He has invited ALL ... the questions is ... will all receive and respond to His invitation?