

GOD'S PURPOSE, PLAN AND PEOPLE

Pastor Mark Hodgetts

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God has a purpose and a plan for His creation in general, for His Church at large, but also for you as an individual.

EPH 1:1-14 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

⁵having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

⁷In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

⁸which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

⁹Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.

¹⁰that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth – in Him.

¹¹In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.

¹²that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

¹³In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

1. GOD'S CREATIVE PURPOSE

*GEN 1:26 Then God said, "**Let Us** make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

According to this Scripture, humankind's creative purpose is two-fold:

▪ **WE WERE CREATED TO EMULATE GOD'S GLORY**

GEN 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..."

ISA 43:7 "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

We see the Trinity in our foundational text:

*EPH 1:6 To the praise of the **glory** of His (the Father's) grace...*

*EPH 1:12 ...We who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His (Jesus') **glory**.*

*EPH 1:14 Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His (the Holy Spirit's) **glory**.*

Our primary purpose is to bring glory to God.

*ROM 3:23 ...All have sinned and fall short of the **glory** of God.*

*JOHN 17:22 "And the **glory** which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one."*

*2 COR 3:18 [NIV] And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's **glory**, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing **glory**, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

▪ **WE WERE CREATED TO EXERCISE GODLY AUTHORITY**

*GEN 1:26 Then God said, "...let them **have dominion**..."*

*PS 8:1-9 O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who set Your **glory** above the heavens! ²Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. ³When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, ⁴What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? ⁵For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with **glory** and honour. ⁶You have made him to **have dominion** over the works of Your hands; you have put all things under his feet, ⁷All sheep and oxen – even the beasts of the field, ⁸The birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. ⁹O Lord, our Lord, **how excellent is Your name** in all the earth!*

We have been created to rule with God and do the works of God.

*EPH 2:10 For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Jesus fulfilled this two-fold purpose on earth:

*JOHN 17:4 "I have **glorified You** on the earth. I have **finished the work** which You have given Me to do."*

God's purposes are good:

*GEN 2:18 And the Lord God said, "It is **not good** that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

*GEN 1:31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was **very good**...*

Preparation speaks of thoughtfulness.

*PS 19:1-11 [TLB] The heavens are telling the **glory** of God; they are a marvellous display of His craftsmanship. ²Day and night they keep on telling about God. ³Without a sound or word, silent in the skies, their message reaches out to all the world. The sun lives in the heavens where God placed it ⁵and moves out across the skies as radiant as a bridegroom going to his wedding, or as joyous as an athlete looking forward to a race! ⁶The sun crosses the heavens from end to end, and nothing can hide from its heat. ⁷God's laws are perfect. ⁸They protect us, make us wise, and give us joy and light. ⁹God's laws are pure, eternal, just. ¹⁰They are more desirable than gold. They are sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb. ¹¹For they warn us away from harm and **give success** to those who obey them.*

God wants you, as part of His creation, to reflect His glory, but He is also interested in your success.

2. GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PLAN

Adam and Eve did not fulfil God's purpose or follow God's plan. They fell in sin, but God sent Jesus to introduce His plan of redemption.

Let us look at some key words in *EPH 1* indicating that God is a God of purpose with a plan.

First, we are looking at some terms speaking about the **strong foundation** of God's plan:

VERSE	TERM	MEANING
v2	Peace	<i>Gr. eirene</i> (probably from the verb <i>eiro</i> "to join") = lit. "at oneness", "harmony". God's plan is sourced in His order and harmony.
v8	Wisdom	<i>Gr. sophia</i> = "wisdom". Without wisdom there cannot be a purpose or plan. God's plan is established on His wisdom.
v9	Knowledge (made known)	<i>Gr. gnoizo</i> (from the noun <i>gnosis</i> "knowledge, understanding" or the verb <i>ginosko</i> "to know, to understand, to be sure, to be resolved") = "to make known, to declare". God's plan is based on His perfect knowledge.
v11	Counsel	<i>Gr. boule</i> = "counsel, advice, resolve, will". God's plan is built on His clear resolve.
v11	Work	<i>Gr. energeo</i> (from <i>energos</i> lit. "to be at work in") = "to be active, efficient or effectual". God's plan is supported by His power.
v10	Consummation (gather together)	<i>Gr. anakephalaiomai</i> (from <i>ana</i> "up" and <i>kephalaioo</i> lit. "to hit on the head") = "to sum up", "to consummate", "to unite", to bring together under one head". God's plan is completed in Christ.

Let us now look at terms referring to **our place and benefits** in God's plan:

VERSE	TERM	MEANING
v1,5,9,11	Will	<i>Gr. thelema</i> (from the verb <i>thelo</i> "to determine, to choose or prefer, to intend") = "determination, volition, inclination, desire, choice". God exercised His will concerning us.
v4	Choice (chose)	<i>Gr. eklegomai</i> (from <i>ek</i> "out of" and <i>lego</i> lit. "to lay forth", "to speak" = lit. "to call out", "to select, to make a choice, to pick out, to mean". God has called us out. God has made a choice concerning us.
v8	Prudence	<i>Gr. phronesis</i> (from noun <i>phren</i> "mind, feelings" or verb <i>phroneo</i> "to exercise the mind") = "intellectual/moral insight, prudence", "to have an opinion about, to interest oneself in". God takes an interest in us and has set His affection on us.
v5,9	Delight (good pleasure)	<i>Gr. eudokia</i> (from <i>eu</i> "good" and <i>dokeo</i> "to think") = lit. "good thinking or good thoughts", "delight, satisfaction, purpose". God is thinking good thoughts about us.
v3	Blessing	<i>Gr. eulogia</i> (from <i>eu</i> "good" and <i>logos</i> "word, topic, speaking, reasoning, motive" or <i>lego</i> "to express in words, to mean") = lit. "fine speaking", "to invoke a benefit or prosperity upon". God has invoked blessings over us.
v2,6,7	Grace	<i>Gr. charis</i> (from verb <i>chairo</i> "to be cheerful, to be well-off") = "favour, liberality, benefit, gift, graciousness, joy, pleasure, gratitude". God planned for us to enjoy certain (undeserved) benefits.
v6	Favour (made accepted)	<i>Gr. charitoo</i> (from <i>charis</i> "grace") = "highly favoured, accepted". God planned to accept and favour us.
v5	Adoption	<i>Gr. huiothesia</i> (from <i>huios</i> "[mature] son" and <i>tithemi</i> lit. "to place", "to put, to appoint, to ordain") = lit. "to place in a position as a son". God planned to make us His rightful heirs.
v11	Inheritance (obtain inheritance)	<i>Gr. kleroo</i> (from noun <i>kleros</i> "allotment, heritage, inheritance") = "to allot or assign privilege". God planned to give us an inheritance.
v7	Riches	<i>Gr. ploutos</i> (from <i>pletho</i> "to fill, to fulfil, to supply, to furnish, to accomplish") = "fullness of wealth, abundance". God planned to provide for us.
v7	Redemption	<i>Gr. apolutrosis</i> (from <i>apo</i> "away, from" and <i>lutron</i> "ransom") = "liberation by payment of a ransom", "release from captivity or slavery", "buying back". God's plan provided the price for our freedom.
v7	Forgiveness	<i>Gr. aphasis</i> (from <i>apo</i> "away, from" and <i>hiemi</i> "to send") = lit. "a sending away", "remission, suspension, pardon, liberty from a penalty imposed", "removal of the cause of offence". God's plan provided the means for our forgiveness.

Lastly, let us consider terms referring to the **timing** of God's plan:

VERSE	TERM	MEANING
v9,11	Purpose	<i>Gr. prothesis</i> (from <i>pro</i> "before, prior" and <i>tithemi</i> lit. "to place", to appoint, to ordain") = lit. "to place before or prior, to exhibit", "to set forth, to propose or determine". God's plan was in place beforehand.
v5,11	Predestination (predestined)	<i>Gr. proorizo</i> (from <i>pro</i> "before, prior" and <i>horizo</i> "to mark out a boundary, to specify, to determine") = "to determine in advance". God marked out and framed His plan for us in advance.

3. GOD'S RECEPTIVE PEOPLE

EPH 2:10 For we are **His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**

Read also **1 PET 1:18; 2 TIM 1:9; EPH 5:15-17 [AMP]** and **ACTS 11:23.**

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