

Ephesians 1:3-10 (NIV)**Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ**

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he^[a] predestined us for adoption to sonship^[b] through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ he^[c] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Footnotes:

- a. [Ephesians 1:5](#) Or *sight in love*. ⁵ *He*
- b. [Ephesians 1:5](#) The Greek word for *adoption to sonship* is a legal term referring to the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in Roman culture.
- c. [Ephesians 1:9](#) Or *us with all wisdom and understanding*. ⁹ *And he*

Ephesians 1:3-10 (HCSB)**God's Rich Blessings**

³ Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens. ⁴ For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight.^[a] In love^[b] ⁵ He predestined us to be adopted through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to His favor and will, ⁶ to the praise of His glorious grace that He favored us with in the Beloved.

⁷ We have redemption in Him through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He planned in Him ¹⁰ for the administration^[c] of the days of fulfillment^[d]—to bring everything together in the Messiah, both things in heaven and things on earth in Him.

Footnotes:

- a. [Ephesians 1:4](#) Vv. 3-14 are 1 sentence in Gk.
- b. [Ephesians 1:4](#) Or *In His sight in love*
- c. [Ephesians 1:10](#) Or *dispensation*; lit *house law* (Gk *oikonomia*)
- d. [Ephesians 1:10](#) Lit *the fulfillment of times*

Holman Christian Standard Bible - Study Bible¹
Ephesians 1:3-10

1:3-14 Following the greeting in [verses 1-2](#) is a sequence of phrases about the marvelous **spiritual blessing(s)** that belong to the church in Jesus Christ. All of these blessings are assured to each believer, for they flow from God's grace, wisdom, and eternal purpose. These 12 verses form one long sentence in the Greek.

1:3 Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: This section often is called "the doxology" because it recites what God has done and is an expression to Him of worship, praise, and honor. Similar doxologies are found in [2Co 1:3](#) and [1Pe 1:3](#). In this majestic section, Paul wrote of the blessings that belong to the church through the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God has blessed us with all of the blessings in the heavenly realms. These blessings include our union with Christ; being seated with Him in the heavenlies; and our adoption, redemption, and election. All spiritual gifts and service abilities also flow out of these spiritual blessings that God gives to every believer at the time of salvation.

1:4 He chose us in Him: The idea of divine election flows out of the important theme of spiritual union, for election is "in Christ." The doctrine of election is one of the most central and one of the most misunderstood teachings of the Bible. At its most basic level, election refers to God's plan whereby He accomplishes His will. The meaning of election is best understood as God's Sovereign initiative in bringing persons to faith in Christ, resulting in a special covenant relationship with Him. This theme serves as a foundation to the entire opening section of Ephesians, which includes the phrases: God "chose us" ([v. 4](#)); "predestined us" ([v. 5](#)); and "predestined according to the purpose" ([v. 11](#)). Paul's focus on the Christ-centered character of election is vitally important. God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. This indicates the centrality of the gospel in God's plan for history. We are chosen **to be holy and blameless**. Holiness and blamelessness are the results, not the basis, of God's election.

1:5 He predestined us: All of God's blessings are in accord with sovereign predestination, which is purposeful and grounded in love. Predestination refers to the consistent and coherent intention of God's will, an eternal decision rendering certain that which will come to pass. **Adopted through Jesus Christ:** Through God's purposeful love, believers are adopted into God's family. Adoption is the legal declaration that we are God's children with all of the rights, privileges, and duties belonging to believers.

proorizo

Greek Pronunciation [prah ah RID zoh]

HCSB Translation predestine

Uses in Ephesians 2

Uses in the NT 6

Focus passage [Ephesians 1:5,11](#)

Proorizo (*predestine, predetermine*) first appears in Greek literature in the writings of Paul, who may have coined the term. In the NT, this verb consistently refers to God's *predetermined* plan to culminate salvation history in the person of Jesus Christ. For this reason, God the Father is always the subject of this verb in the NT. The early church saw Jesus' sufferings as the *predetermined* plan of God in accordance with OT Scriptures ([Ac 4:28](#)). The whole of the Christian salvation experience has been *predestined* by God. Christians have received both their calling and adoption into the rights of Christian sonship because of God's loving

1. Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), *WORDsearch* CROSS e-book, Under: "Ephesians 1".

predetermination ([Rm 8:30](#); [Eph 1:5,11](#)). God has *predetermined* those whom He foreknew (see *proginosko*; [Rm 11:2](#)) to be ultimately conformed to the image of His Son Jesus ([Rm 8:29](#)). Finally, God *predetermined* before the ages His mysterious plan of salvation ([1Co 2:7](#)).

1:6 The ultimate purpose of God's redemption plan is **the praise of His glorious grace**. Grace is God's free favor to the undeserving. Believers are given grace simply because God is gracious.

1:7 Redemption in Him means that believers have been bought with the price of Christ's blood ([1Co 6:20](#); [1Tim 2:6](#); [1Pe 1:18-19](#)) and have been redeemed from sin, Satan, and the misery of sinful self. The result of redemption is a sending away or banishment of our sin debt, resulting in complete forgiveness.

Perseverance of the Saints

Daniel B. Wallace

The perseverance of the saints is one of the most vital and precious truths of Scripture. Essentially, this doctrine means two things: (1) those who are genuinely saved will be saved forever, and (2) those who continue in the faith are genuinely saved.

False Security

All who will be saved forever are saved because of Christ's work on the cross and God's power to keep them saved. Known as eternal security, this truth is often stated as, "Once saved, always saved." Unfortunately, many people think that simply making a confession at some point in their lives means they are saved even if their lives bear no Christian fruit. Some even think they can live like the Devil and yet be safe because of their earlier confession. But genuine faith requires genuine repentance ([Mk 4:12](#); [Ac 2:38](#); [20:21](#)).

True Security

Genuine believers continue in the faith and good works throughout their lives. One basis for this conclusion is Jesus' parable of the sower ([Mt 13:3-23](#); [Mk 4:3-20](#); [Lk 8:4-15](#)). Only the fourth soil type bears fruit even though the second and third types show life (belief) for a short while. The fourth soil symbolizes a genuine believer. The bearing of fruit (continuing in the faith and good works) is also the evidence of genuine belief named in [John 15](#), where Jesus said only the branch that bears fruit is saved ([vv. 5-6](#)).

The Source of Security

Believers do not continue in the faith by their own strength. Rather, each member of the Trinity works to preserve them. In the first place our salvation completely depends on Jesus' work, not on our merit (cp. [Rm 3:21-26](#); [4:5-8](#); [8:1](#); [Eph 2:8-9](#)). [Romans 8:30](#) is to the point: "And those He predestined, He also called; and those He called, He also justified; and those He justified, He also glorified." So sure is our salvation that Paul speaks of our future glorification in the past tense!

Genuine Christians also continue in the faith because they are sealed with the Holy Spirit as a down payment ([Eph 1:13-14](#)) of the blessings promised by God, including eternal life. Paul had this in mind when he said: "And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. You were sealed by Him for the day of redemption" ([Eph 4:30](#)). God the Spirit assures us of salvation at the beginning of our spiritual life and keeps us in the faith to the end of our earthly life ([Jn 10:27](#); [Rm 8:16](#); [1Jn 2:20,27](#); [Jd 24](#)).

[John 10:27-29](#) teaches that true believers continue to hear the Lord's voice and follow Him, meaning they continue in the faith and in good works. The Lord gives "them eternal life, and they will never perish—ever! No one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all. No one will snatch them out of My hand." But can't a believer, of his own free will, choose to wander out of Jesus' protective hand? No. A good shepherd does not allow his sheep to go astray. As our Good Shepherd, Jesus keeps us safe from the thief (Satan) and from ourselves.

[1:9](#) God's grace has been lavished upon believers in accordance with **the mystery of His will**. Paul does not mean that God's will is secret in the way that the mystery religions of Asia Minor taught. The mystery religions held that the divine expectations were fundamentally hidden from all but an enlightened few, whereas for Paul "mystery" meant the revelation of a component of God's plan so that it now can be understood by all ([3:2-13](#)). Specifically the mystery involved the fulfillment of God's plan to bring everything together in the Messiah.

[1:10](#) **Days of fulfillment:** The goal of history is based on God's divine purpose concerning the crucified redeemer, Jesus the Messiah—for whom, through whom, and in whom are all things. The goal is to establish a new world order of which Jesus Christ is the acknowledged Head ([v. 22](#)). He is the head of a reunited universe. He now rules and reigns from God's right hand; one day He will establish His kingdom and bring in the new heavens and the new earth, fulfilling and finalizing God's redemptive purpose. This is what is involved in bringing together **things in heaven and things on earth in Him**.

English Standard Version - Study Bible²
Ephesians 1:3-10

1:3-14 Spiritual Blessings in Christ. In the original Greek, this section is one long, elegant sentence. Paul shows that the triune God initiated and accomplished cosmic reconciliation and redemption for the praise of his glory.

1:3 Blessed be. The blessing that opens Paul’s prayer is similar to those that began first-century Jewish prayers that were commonly recited throughout the day (cf. [2 Cor. 1:3](#); [1 Pet. 1:3](#)). **in Christ.** Paul’s praise emphasizes the mediation of Christ for all God’s blessings by repeating that these good things are ours “in Christ” ([Eph. 1:3, 9](#)), “in the Beloved” ([v. 6](#)), or “in him” ([vv. 4, 7, 11, 13](#)). **Spiritual** (Gk. *pneumatikos*) here communicates that the saving gifts of God are conveyed by the Holy Spirit (Gk. *Pneuma*), whose personal presence throughout this age is the guarantee of future heavenly blessings (see “spiritual songs” in [5:19](#); [Col. 3:16](#)). Hence, these blessings are in **heavenly places**, since that is the Christian’s future abode in imperishable glory when he is resurrected in a spiritual body through the “last Adam,” the “life-giving spirit” ([1 Cor. 15:40, 44-50](#)).

1:4 He chose us in him means that the Father chose Christians in the Son (Christ), and this took place in eternity past, **before the foundation of the world**. This indicates that for all eternity the Father has had the role of leading and directing among the persons of the Trinity, even though Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equal in deity and attributes. God’s initiative in redeeming the believer from sin and death was not an arbitrary or whimsical decision but something God had planned all along “in Christ.” Since God chose his people in his love, they can take no credit for their salvation. God was determined to have them as his own (see note on [2:8](#)). **holy.** God chose them with the goal that they be holy and **blameless before him**. This goal is not optional for Christians—it is the purpose of election. Holiness here expresses moral purity, while blamelessness expresses freedom from the guilt of trespasses and sins in which the Christian formerly walked ([1:7](#); [2:1, 5](#)). **In love**, at the end of [1:4](#), properly belongs to [v. 5](#), describing predestination, though the ESV footnote indicates that “in love” can also be taken with the preceding phrase (“that we should be holy and blameless before him in love”). Versification was introduced into Bibles in the sixteenth century A.D. for convenience and is not part of the original inspired text.

1:5 predestined. Previously ordained or appointed to some position. God’s election of Christians ([v. 4](#)) entails his predestining them *to* something—in this case to **adoption as sons** (see also [v. 11](#); [Rom. 8:29-30](#)). Hence, election and predestination in this context refer to God’s decision to save someone. All Christians, male and female, are “sons” in the sense of being heirs who will inherit blessings from their Father in heaven. Paul qualifies and stresses God’s plan and initiation of redemption with the phrase **according to the purpose of his will** here and elsewhere in the passage ([Eph. 1:9, 11](#)). God cannot be constrained by any outside force, and his inexorable will for believers is to pour out his grace and goodness on them in Christ Jesus.

1:6 God’s ultimate purpose is not redemption as such but the **praise** of his glorious name through redemption. This theme is repeated at key junctures in the argument (see [vv. 12, 14](#)).

2. Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible, The: English Standard Version*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2008), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Ephesians 1".

1:7 Redemption denotes ransoming someone from captivity or from slavery. The supreme OT example was the exodus, where God redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt (see [Ex. 15:13](#); [Deut. 7:8](#); [2 Sam. 7:23](#); [Mic. 6:4](#)). **Forgiveness of our trespasses** explains the nature of redemption: Christians are freed from slavery to sin and guilt. This was effected by Christ's **blood**, which means his death as an atoning sacrifice (see also [Rom. 3:24](#); [Eph. 1:14](#); [2:13](#); [4:30](#); [Heb. 9:15](#)).

1:9 Mystery as used in Scripture (Gk. *mystērion*) refers to the revelation of something that was previously hidden or known only vaguely but now is more fully made known (see note on [Col. 1:26-27](#)). The mystery of God's will, now revealed **in Christ**, is "to unite all things in him" ([Eph. 1:10](#); see also [3:3-11](#)).

1:10 fullness of time. "When the time was ripe," i.e., the time for the fulfillment of God's plan. **unite.** This is the central theme of the passage: God has effected cosmic reconciliation in Christ. The work of Christ on the cross is the central axis for the history of creation, whether **in heaven** or **on earth** (see also [Col. 1:15-20](#)), since he has redeemed his people and silenced all hostile powers (see [Eph. 3:10](#)).

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

Ephesians 3:1-10

1:3 "Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms" means that in Christ we have all the benefits of knowing God—being chosen for salvation, being adopted as his children, forgiveness, insight, the gifts of the Spirit, power to do God's will, the hope of living forever with Christ. Because we have an intimate relationship with Christ, we can enjoy these blessings now. The "heavenly realms" means that these blessings are eternal, not temporal. The blessings come from Christ's spiritual realm, not the earthly realm of the goddess Artemis. Other references to the heavenly realms in this letter include [1:20](#); [2:6](#); [3:10](#). Such passages reveal Christ in his victorious, exalted role as ruler of all.

1:4 Paul says that God "chose us" to emphasize that salvation depends totally on God. We are not saved because we deserve it but because God is gracious and freely gives salvation. We did not influence God's decision to save us; he saved us according to his plan. Thus, there is no way to take credit for our salvation or to allow room for pride. The mystery of salvation originated in the timeless mind of God long before we existed. It is hard to understand how God could accept us. But because of Christ, we are holy and blameless in his sight. God chose us, and when we belong to him through Jesus Christ, God looks at us as if we had never sinned. All we can do is express our thanks for his wonderful love.

1:5 That God "decided in advance to adopt us" is another way of saying that salvation is God's work and not our own doing. In his infinite love, God has adopted us as his own children. Through Jesus' sacrifice, he has brought us into his family and made us heirs along with Jesus ([Romans 8:17](#)). In Roman law, adopted children had the same rights and privileges as biological children, even if they had been slaves. Paul uses this term to show how strong our relationship to God is. Have you entered into this loving relationship with God? For more on the meaning of adoption, see [Galatians 4:5-7](#).

1:7 To speak of Jesus' blood was an important first-century way of speaking of Christ's death. His death points to two wonderful truths—redemption and forgiveness. *Redemption* was the price paid to gain freedom for a slave ([Leviticus 25:47-54](#)). Through his death, Jesus paid the price to release us from slavery to sin. *Forgiveness* was granted in Old Testament times on the basis of the shedding of animals' blood ([Leviticus 17:11](#)). Now we are forgiven on the basis of the shedding of Jesus' blood—he died as the perfect and final sacrifice (see also [Romans 5:9](#); [Ephesians 2:13](#); [Colossians 1:20](#); [Hebrews 9:22](#); [1 Peter 1:19](#)).

1:7, 8 God showered his kindness on us—this is also called God's "grace." This is his voluntary and loving favor given to those he saves. We can't earn salvation, nor do we deserve it. No religious, intellectual, or moral effort can gain it, because it comes only from God's mercy and love. Without God's grace, no person can be saved. To receive it, we must acknowledge that we cannot save ourselves, that only God can save us, and that our only way to receive this loving favor is through faith in Christ.

1:9, 10 God was not intentionally keeping his mysterious plan a secret, but his plan for the world could not be fully understood until Christ rose from the dead. His purpose for sending Christ was to unite Jews and Gentiles in one body with Christ as the head. Many people still do not understand God's plan; but at the right time, he will bring us together to be with him forever. Then everyone will understand. On that day, all people will bow to Jesus as Lord, either because they love him or because they fear his power (see [Philippians 2:10, 11](#)).

³Life Application Study Bible, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1998-1999.