

Ephesians - Lesson 2

Ephesians 1:3-14

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, without Your help our labor is useless, and without Your light our search is in vain. Invigorate our study of Your holy Word that, by due diligence and right discernment, we may establish ourselves and others in Your holy faith; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Small Catechism Review

Commandments 4-7 (p. 321)

Review of Previous Lesson

- Paul is the author of Ephesians
- Verses 1-2 should not be overlooked
- Grace denotes undeserved favor shown by God to sinners.
- Peace reflects the traditional Hebrew greeting *shalom*, meaning wellness in body and soul.
 - Peace is given to us through Christ. We are passive.
- Luther explains Grace and Peace embrace the entire Christian Gospel.

Chapter 1

Overview of Verses 3-14

- Verses 3-14 is one long sentence in the Greek, and is considered the longest in the entire NT.
- After the salutation, Paul follows the Hellenistic tradition of giving thanks.
 - This he does in many of his other writings; however in Galatians and Titus he abandons this and gets down to business.

Verse 3

- **Read this verse**
- Three times within this verse various forms of the word “bless” is used.
- **Question - Where else is this word used within the NT?**
 - Luke 1:42 (Mary and Elizabeth) and the Beatitudes in Matt. 5
- In the NT εὐλογητός is never used in reference to men like in Luke 1:42 and the Beatitudes. Its use is exclusively doxological, that is praising God.
- In the OT equivalent may have referred to the bending of the knee. This involved paying homage and receiving a blessing.
- Thus it has a twofold meaning in the OT.
 - First - God’s bestowal of gifts on people
 - Second - Praise when applied to the peoples response to God.
- The use in Ephesians:
 - 1st Use:
 - Proclaim who God is. Additionally, this includes what he has done and calls upon others to join in the act.
 - 2 & 3rd Use:
 - God the Father remains the doer. It’s His action alone that is praised.
 - God gives spiritual gifts.
 - This embraces the atoning work of Christ.

- It is in Baptism when the benefits of Christ's work were given to you.

Verses 4-14

- This thanksgiving of this section addresses each person of the Trinity
 - Father: Verses 4-6
 - Son: Verses 7-12
 - Holy Spirit: 13-14
- Each one of these sections ends with the phrase *to the praise of his glory*

Verses 4-6

- **Read verses 4-6**
- Section focuses on the Father
- Focus here is on the word chose. This is reflexive in that God choses us for himself.
- Chosen is not new:
 - In the OT Israel was God's "chosen people"
 - Jesus Christ is called God's "Chosen One" (Luke 23:35)
 - In baptism you were chosen by God to be his beloved son.
- The modifying prepositional phrase: "before the foundation of the world" suggests there is more than Baptism in mind.
 - This is an explicit reference to creation.
- Choosing occurred not only in history at the moment of Baptism but also before history in the eternity of God's will.
- Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration Article XI: Election states:
 - *Foreknowledge*: applies to all creatures, good and evil. It means that God sees and knows everything that is or will be
 - *Election*: is God's preordination to salvation.
 - Does not apply to both the godly and the evil. Only to the children of God.
 - He chose us in Christ Jesus
 - Additional Thoughts:
 - Formula rejects the notion that God is somehow responsible for evil deeds and predestining them for eternal damnation
 - Ephesians 1 speaks only to God's elect children
 - Formula also rejects the use of predestination that might induce despair among those whom believe they have not been chosen.
 - Emphasis here is on the merits of Christ and the Spirit's work in Work and Sacrament.
- **Baptism into Christ is the moment when God's eternal choosing is made manifest. Emerging from his hidden will to become the certain object of saving faith.**
- In baptism we are presented holy and without blemish.
 - This phrase will come up again later in Ephesians 5 in regards to Christ and the Church
- God's choice in eternity and in the act of Baptism arises from his plan of salvation.

Verses 7-12

- **Read verses 7-12**
- This section focuses on the Son.

- Verse 7
 - We could essentially start this section out “Because we are in Christ, we have...”
 - The word “have” should be emphasized. This present tense. You have redemption as we speak, the chief blessing from God. This is not something in the past.
 - This redemption only comes through the spilling of Christ’s blood. On account of your sins and trespasses, a sacrifice needed to be made.
- Verses 9-10
 - One commentator mentions this could be a theme of Ephesians.
 - The law had been revealed in many ways over the ages.
 - God’s forgiving nature could only be known through His Word.
 - Prior to the Advent of Christ, the Gospel was revealed only partially.
 - How God was going to work redemption, specifically that would be worked out on the cross and the grave, was hidden in God’s mind as part of his eternal plan.
 - However, through Christ all had been revealed.
 - This is what the Formula of Concord says is the revealed will of God. (FC SD, XI, 26)

Verses 13-14

- **Read verses 13-14**
- This section focuses on the Holy Spirit
- “Having heard the word of truth...”
 - Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ (Romans 10:17)
 - Yet, more than just a message.
 - Christ himself is the word made flesh (John 1:14)
 - He is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)
- “Sealed with the Holy Spirit...”
 - This is a Divine Passive. God is the agent of this sealing
 - This sealing followed the proclamation of the Gospel and people believing it.
 - Through faith and Holy Baptism all receive the same promised Holy Spirit.
 - Baptism:
 - Often referred to indirectly throughout scripture than to be named directly
 - Examples: washing, stripping and clothing, rebirth, adoption, election, death and resurrection.
 - Christ’s baptism is tied to our baptism.
 - Part of His atoning work - to fulfill all righteousness.
 - Here, our sins have become his and his righteousness becomes ours.
 - Your sins are then carried to cross.
 - Paul alludes to Christ’s Baptism in this section, which allows him to refer to it throughout the rest of the Epistle.
 - Paul explains how we are united in Christ’s as one body on the cross (2:16)
 - This is made possible through baptism
 - Paul will expand this further when he states that there is one baptism (4:5), on which all divisions between members of the body of Christ are broken down and replace by a spiritual unity.

Questions?

Thoughts/Questions

Any other items you would like to discuss?

Closing Prayers

O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have safely brought us to the beginning of this day. Defend us in the same with Your mighty power, and grant that this day we fall into no sin neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings, being ordered by Your governance, may be righteous in Your sight; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.