

GOD'S GLORIOUS PLAN IN CHRIST

(Ephesians 1:8-10)

Praising God for the glory of His saving work is the theme of Paul's doxology in Ephesians 1:3-14. Paul is ascribing worship and praise to God for He reveals Himself as a saving God. In verses 4-6, Paul praises God because the Father has chosen us in Christ and adopted us to be His children. In verses 7-10, Paul blesses God because the Son, our Lord Jesus, has redeemed us with His blood and provided complete forgiveness for our sins. In verses 11-14, Paul exalts God because the Holy Spirit has guaranteed our eternal inheritance in heaven. As we turn to Ephesians 1:8-10, we will consider two significant truths about God's glorious plan in Christ. In our reflection, we will learn that in the midst of the brokenness and pain in this fallen world and in our own life, we could still bless God because His glorious plan involves our redemption in Christ and the ultimate universal reign of our Lord Jesus where sin, suffering and death will be no more.

1. *God's glorious plan is revealed to us through His _____.*

In the abundance of His grace, God has not only granted us redemption in Christ and the complete forgiveness of our sins. God has also provided us with the gift of wisdom and insight (Eph. 1:7-8). Wisdom emphasizes the knowledge and understanding of ultimate realities and eternal truths as revealed by God in His Word. Insight refers to practical discernment that leads to righteous and godly living. This gift of wisdom and insight also enables us respond to every life situation with God's perspective in mind (Eph. 6:10, 16-17). More specifically, God's gift of wisdom is divinely intended to reveal to us the mystery of God's will (Eph. 1:9). Biblical mystery is any divine truth which cannot be understood or accepted by mere human reason (1 Cor. 2:14; John 8:43-44). This divine mystery also refers to God's will and plan that was previously unknown but now has been revealed to us (Eph. 3:3-5). It pleases and delights the heart of God to make known to us the fullness of His salvation plan which is set forth in Christ and culminates in the glory of our Lord Jesus.

2. *God's glorious plan is to _____ under the headship of Christ.*

God's glorious plan in Christ is further described as His "plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. 1:10). To unite all things in Christ connotes the idea of God's work of bringing harmony and restoration to every created realm that is broken and disintegrated by sin (Gen. 1:31; Col. 1:16-17). To unite all things in Christ points us to that divinely appointed time when all unbelieving men and women who persist in their sin and rebellion and all fallen angels who reject God and Christ will be cast away into eternal hell and every vestige of sin is eradicated from the realm of what God has created (2 Thess. 1:8-9; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). We who are in Christ must look forward to this glorious time of restoration and renewal where all redeemed believers in Christ, all faithful and righteous angels, and this entire universe, will be reunited in Christ and be subject to Him as our Lord and King for all eternity in the new heaven and the new earth (Phil. 2:10-11).
