

Series: Ephesians
Title: God's Effectual Grace
Text: Ephesians 1: 11
Date: April 14, 2013
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Ephesians 1: 11 says that "In Christ, we have obtained an inheritance." Our focus this morning will be the second half of verse 11 and the first part of verse 12 which tells us how and why each believer is called by God's grace and receives this inheritance—"being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."

Divisions: I. FIRST, THE SPIRIT OF GOD SAYS THAT BELIEVERS HAVE OBTAINED AN INHERITANCE IN CHRIST BECAUSE GOD PREDESTINATED US TO OBTAIN IN IT—**V11:...being predestinated**; II. SECONDLY, GOD'S PREDESTINATION OF HIS PEOPLE WAS—**V11: according to the purpose of him**. III. THIRDLY, SPEAKING OF GOD WE ARE TOLD THAT GOD WORKS ALL THINGS AND HOW—**V11: who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will**; IV. THE END CAUSE IS FOR SAVING US THE WAY HE DOES—**V12: That we should be to the praise of his glory,...**

Title: God's Effectual Grace

Proposition: The counsel of God's own will, by which God purposes and works all things, is the same by which God predestinated his people and works grace in the hearts of his people.

I. FIRST, BELIEVERS ARE BORN OF GOD AND OBTAIN AN INHERITANCE IN CHRIST BECAUSE GOD PREDESTINATED US TO IT—V11:...being predestinated

Back in verse 5 the Spirit of God says each believer is predestinated to SONSHIP in Christ, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." In our text in verse 11, the Spirit says that in Christ we were also predestinated to an inheritance, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated."

Predestination is God the Father "pre-appointing or foreordaining." The word means "to limit in advance, to predetermine." "PRE" refers to the time which was "before the foundation of the world"—as verse 4 tells us. "DESTINATED" refers to the end foreordained by God, which in verse 11 is "inheritance in Christ", "In [Christ] ALSO we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated."

God does nothing as an afterthought. When the Jews did not believe and Christ sent his preachers to the Gentiles that was not God reacting. Before he created anything, God determined who his children would be and predestinated us to experience sonship into his family. Also, he predestinated us unto an eternal inheritance—life everlasting in his presence. And both are in, by and through Christ Jesus the Son of God.

Application: I love to know that God predetermined and predestinated these things because by it God secured the grace of adoption and a heavenly portion for each child God chose in Christ. David said, "God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ORDERED in all things, and sure." The word "ordered" refers to God "predestinating" these things. (2 Sam 23: 5) God is a God of order. That is who God is. Every child of God find the great comfort in knowing our God is sovereign in ordering all things, especially in matters of our eternal salvation.

II. SECONDLY, GOD PREDESTINATED US —V11: "according to the purpose of him."

God's predestinated his children, according to God's own purpose. God's purpose is in himself as verse 9 says. God has "made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath **PURPOSED IN HIMSELF.**" Christ Jesus our Lord is God himself in whom God purposed all things as we are told in Ephesians 3: 11, "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Purpose means "proposal or intention." God proposed in himself in Christ Jesus our Lord what he would. Because God cannot be frustrated in anything, God's purpose cannot be frustrated. God purposed to create all things. Therefore he did it according to his purpose which he purposed in himself. God purposed to create man after his own image. Therefore God did it according to his purpose which he purposed in himself. God purposed to be gracious to whom he would be gracious and to save whom he would. Therefore God did it, and does it, according to his purpose which he purposed in himself.

We saw eight things it pleased God to do. Things God purposed in himself.

- It pleased God for Christ to have all preeminence, for all fullness to dwell in Christ. (Col 1: 18-19) God purposed it, God did it.
- It pleased God to make a people for himself (1 Sam 12: 22; Eph 1: 3) God purposed it, God did it.
- It pleased God to bruise his Son in place of his people. (Is 53: 10) God purposed it, God did it.
- It pleased God for his pleasure to prosper in his Son's hand so God raised him from the dead giving him all power over all things to the church. (Is 53: 10; Eph 1: 20-23). God purposed it, God did it. And Christ shall not fail.
- It pleased God to save through the foolishness of preaching. (1 Cor 1: 21) God purposed it. God shall do it.
- It pleased God to hide the mystery from some and reveal it to babes when it pleases him. (Mt 11: 26; Gal 1: 15) God purposed it. God shall do it.
- It pleased God in the dispensation of the fullness of times together all things in one, in Christ. (Eph 1: 10; Col 1: 26-28). God purposed. God shall do it.
- It pleased God to give his people an eternal inheritance. (Eph 1: 11; Lk 12: 32) God purposed it. God shall do it.

Illustration: God made us after his image. Because of our sin, we lost that image as far as holiness and righteousness is concerned. Yet, in a limited sense, we still do innumerable tasks each day where we first purpose what we will do then carry out our purpose.

So it is when God proposed and intended in himself to predestinate his chosen children to experience sonship into his family by Christ Jesus he did it. God purposed in himself to predestinate his chosen children to obtain an inheritance in Christ so in Isaiah 46: 11 God said, "I have purposed it, I will also do it." So for those God has quickened and called by his grace, "in Christ we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated, according to his purpose." (v11)

III. THIRDLY, SPEAKING OF GOD—V11: "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.');

Worketh, Counsel, and Will

First, the word translated "worketh" means "powerfully and effectually." It literally means God "worketh all things effectually."

Secondly, the word "counsel" refers to the wisdom, strength, understanding and judgment of God.

Job 12:13: With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

Proverbs 8: 14: Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. God does not deliberate and then decide what is best to do like we do.

Acts 15:18: Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

God's counsel is not a way to do things, God's counsel is the way to do things—the way in which God does all things. He is “wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.” (Is 28: 29) God certainly does not take counsel with his creatures—with sinners like you and I. The counsel of God is with himself—in Christ Jesus—even as he purposed in himself, in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 40: 13: Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* his counsellor hath taught him? 14: With whom took he counsel, and *who* instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?...17 All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity...22:...the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers;...

Romans 11: 34: For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35: Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36: For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

Thirdly, when it says in verse 11, “**HIS OWN WILL**”, it simply means his own “desire or good pleasure.” God's will is as sovereign as God is. Whatever is God's will to do that is what God does.

The Point in the Context

So let's put it together to get the point in the context. God has omnipotent power to effectually work, to execute and perform all things in providence and he does. Verse 11 clearly says, God “**worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.**”

- In the smallest details, God effectually works all things after the counsel of his own will. Christ said, “The very hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Matthew 10 30) “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.” (Matthew 10:29)
- In the things men vainly attribute to luck, God effectually works all things after the counsel of his own will. Once during a battle “a certain man drew a bow at A VENTURE” and shot at King Ahab. “And smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: (2 Kings 13: 34) Men will say, “Lucky shot.” But God told beforehand that Ahab would be slain when he went out to battle; so God guided the arrow effectually. God had predetermined that Ahab would not go home from that battle. Things are not by chance, God works them all.
- In the hearts of kings, God effectually works all things after the counsel of his own will. Nebuchadnezzar went forth to do battle upon one of two cities: Rabbath of the Ammonites or Jerusalem. He came to a fork in the road: one way led to one city the other way to the other city. He called for his diviners who: “used divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.” (Eze 21: 21) He used plain old superstition, to determine if he should go to the right or the left. 'At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem.' (Eze 21: 22) So he went and took Jerusalem. But seventy years before, in the days of Hezekiah, God foretold he would. “The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.” (Proverbs 26: 33)

- In the will's of men, God effectually works all things after the counsel of his own will. The Holy Spirit says in James 4: 13, that we should not say "To day or to morrow WE WILL go into such a city... 15: For that ye ought to say, If THE LORD WILL, we shall live, and do this, or that." Three times in the year God commanded all the men of Israel to leave their wives and land in the midst of their enemies and appear before the Lord in Jerusalem. The Lord promised that while they were gone, "neither shall any man desire thy land." (Ex 34: 24) God controls the desires men. Another example is when we see that God hardened Pharaoh's heart so God could show all those signs and teach us his great name. Then when his people needed provisions, after all the plagues, "And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians." (Exodus 12: 36) "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." (Proverbs 21: 1)

God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." So the Spirit of God declares that by the same power by which God works all things in heaven and earth after the counsel of his own will, so too, God brings to pass effectually every aspect of our salvation "after the counsel of his own will."

- God effectually accomplished our redemption through the blood of his Son.
- God effectually brings the gospel to each of his own.
- God effectually regenerates each one to newness of life.
- God effectually reveal Christ in the hearts of each one.
- God effectually gives each one faith and repentance.
- God effectually makes known the mystery of his will in each one. God's grace is effectual, it is irresistible grace!
- God shall effectually gather together in one, all things in Christ, in heaven and in earth, by Christ himself.
- God shall effectually give us our eternal inheritance with him in glory

The reason every aspect of our salvation is "ordered in all things and sure" is because each of God's chosen children have been "predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

Ps 135: 6: Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

Isaiah 46: 10: Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not yet done, saying, MY COUNSEL SHALL STAND, and I WILL DO ALL MY PLEASURE: 11: Calling...the man that executeth MY COUNSEL from a far country: [that man is the GodMan Christ Jesus who came down from heaven, executed and is executing the counsel of God—he is the whole counsel of God] yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.

Romans 9: 16: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.

Brethren, I would stop preaching today if God did not rule the wills of men because the gospel is foolishness to the natural man. Without God making men "willing in the day of his power" it would do me no good to preach because the natural man "cannot know the things of God" until God gives him spiritual discernment.

IV. THE END CAUSE IS THIS—V12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Revelation of His Glory

First, the end of God predestinating us to reveal his glory in us is to reveal to us now HIS GLORY in the face of Christ Jesus: the glory of God in electing us in Christ, the glory of God in redeeming us, justifying us, and making atonement for us in Christ, the glory of God in adopting us as his own sons and daughters, the glory of God in regenerating us by the Holy Spirit, the glory of God in keeping us and bringing us to himself.

2 Corinthians 4: 6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the GLORY OF GOD in the face of Jesus Christ.

Praise of His Glory

Secondly, the end of God predestinating us to our eternal inheritance is that now and forever, we PRAISE HIS GLORY. We praise him now in our worship and by our conduct in this world. And we shall praise him perfectly in that day when we shall know him as he now knows us.

Ephesians 1: 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Ephesians 1: 14:...unto the praise of his glory.

Glory of his Workmanship

Thirdly, God saves this way “that WE should be to the praise of his HIS glory.” One day God shall hold us up before all as “his workmanship.”

Now sinner, God works all things according to the counsel of his own will? God’s will is infallible, perfect, and righteous. But as for sinful man,

Jeremiah 10: 23: O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

What then should we do? Surrender to God, submit all to his will.

Psalms 33:11: The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

These things I am telling you this day are sure things. More sure than the ground we stand on. The earth shall vanish away but “the word of the Lord endureth forever.” Christ Jesus the Lord says,

Revelation 3:18: I COUNSEL thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

May God make you willing in his power to heed his counsel for either in this life, by grace, or in the judgment to come all shall say this,

Ephesians 3:21: Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen!