

## “His Mind, Will, Purpose & Work”

### *Ephesians 1:1-7*

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If you would like to follow along with me today I will be speaking to you from Ephesians Chapter 1. Glorious chapter in the Bible, Ephesians Chapter 1. And if we want to know the mind, and the will, and the purpose and the work of God, all of that is very plainly, very simply laid out in Ephesians Chapter 1. It's important that we know the mind, and the will, and the purpose and the work of our God and He has declared that to us. So Ephesians 1:1 says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ," "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ." What that means is, Paul is speaking God's Word. He very clearly declares that right from the beginning. Paul is speaking God's Word, the prophets and the apostles, they were given by the spirit of God, being moved by the spirit of God, they were given God's actual words and now we have 'em. The canon of the scripture is written. We have God's actual words. This is not Paul's opinion. Sometimes you will hear men refer to the apostles, and refer to the prophets and their writings as though that was their opinion and that's what they thought and they said it here, but changed their mind there. None of that is so. This is God's Word. Paul was speaking God's Word. This is not his opinion. This is not his own teaching. This is God's teaching. These are God's very words. That's so important for us to know. If you want to see that you can find that in 2 Peter Chapter 1. 2 Peter 1, verse 20 says, "Knowing this first, "that no prophecy of the scripture "is of any private interpretation." That means no man came up with this on his own. "No prophecy of the scripture is "of any private interpretation. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man "but holy men of God," set apart men of God, chosen men of God, "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This is God's Word. This is God Almighty's Word. That's what it means when it says Paul an apostle, the word apostle means a messenger, a sent one. This is worthy to be believed, as he told Timothy, this is worthy of all acceptance. You can take this to the bank. This is God's Word. All right? Now if you look with me back at Ephesians 1:1 says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ "by the will of God." By the will of God, that means this is what God wants me to say. This is what God has purposed for me to say. Paul said, "I was made to be an apostle "by the will of God," by the will of God. God did this. And Paul is saying everything I'm about to say is according to the will of God, all of it. His will. Verse one says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ "by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus," he's writing to the Ephesians, "and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." He said, I'm writing to a particular people. I'm writing to the saints that are at Ephesus and I'm writing to all of the faithful in Christ Jesus, all who have been chosen by God to be faithful followers and believers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Over in John 17, this is a very important chapter in the scripture. This is our Lord's high priestly prayer as it's called, where He is praying to His Father and it says in John 17:1, "These words spake Jesus and lifted up His eyes to heaven "and said, 'Father, the hour is come, glorify Thy Son "'that Thy Son also may glorify Thee, "'as Thou has given him power over all flesh,'" power over all flesh,

the whole world, all flesh. He says that He should give eternal life to "as many as Thou hast given Him." That's who Christ came to give eternal life to, as many as the Father gave to Him, not the whole world. Now He has power over the whole world, all flesh. He is the God and sovereign over all flesh. He can do what He wants with whom He wants, but our Lord came into the world to save a particular people, a chosen people according to the will of God the Father. Verse 6, right here in John 17, He said, "I have manifested Thy name unto the men "which Thou gavest Me out of the world, "Thine they were, and Thou gave us them, Me, "and they have kept Thy Word." Verse 9, He said, "I pray for them, "I pray not for the world "but for them which Thou has given Me for they are Thine." Do we see that? This word, this Word of God, the promise of this Word, the good news of this Word is not written to everybody. Salvation is not promised to the entire world. Now, why is it so important that we declare that to men and women? Why am I saying that right now? That's news that when you hear it, it makes you think, oh no. Why is it so important that we declare that to men and women? Why is it so important that we make the Word of God on that clear? Here's the reason why. It's because the very credibility, and authority and power of God depends on it. The very credibility, the very authority and the very power of God depends on it. Think about this with me, okay? Just think about this. If God loved a person, you ask people, "Well, who does God love?" And people naturally say, "Well, God loves everybody." Well, is that what He said about Esau? Is that what He said about Pharaoh? Is that what He said about different ones throughout the scripture? If God loved a person but the person ended up going to hell, what good would God's love be to that person or to anybody for that matter? What good would God's love be? If God loved a person and that person ended up going to hell, what good would God's love be? What would it matter if it could not save, if God loved someone but could not save 'em? What difference would it make whether God loved 'em or not? If Christ shed His blood for a person, you ask people, "Well, who did Christ die for?" The natural answer is, it's wrong, but the natural answer is, "Well, Christ died for everybody." That's not what we just read. If Christ shed His blood for a person, if Christ died for a person but the person ended up going to Hell anyway then what confidence could we have in the cross of Christ? What confidence could we have? We say, "Well, Christ died on the cross "to save His people from their sins." Well, if He died for someone and they went to Hell anyway what confidence could we have in the cross of Christ? What would His blood and His death matter in salvation? What would it matter? He died, they went to hell anyway. If He made a payment for a particular person's sin and they went to hell anyway, what good was the payment? Really, think about that. If Christ wills for someone to be saved, if Christ wants a person to be saved, you will hear men say from pulpits, falsely, wrongly. They'll stand up and say, "Now Christ wants everybody to be saved. "Christ wants you to be saved "if you will let Him, "if you will, this and that." That's wrong. If Christ wants a person to be saved but that person is not saved and ends up going to hell, then Christ is a failure. If Christ wants a person to be saved and He can't save 'em, Christ is a failure. And I'll tell you this, the Lord Jesus Christ is not a failure. The high God, the King of kings, the Almighty Himself is not a failure. God, manifest in the flesh is not a failure. Salvation is not up to chance. Not up to chance with God. Every soul that God loved, He saved. Every one of 'em. Every soul that Christ shed His blood for, He saved, every one of 'em. Every soul that the Spirit calls is going to come running to the God who saved him or her. Salvation is not a choice. Salvation is not resistible. Now, He's trying to save you, but you won't let Him. That's not so. If the Almighty says, "Come to me." We are coming to Him. We don't have a choice in this matter. Salvation's

of the Lord, it's totally of the Lord. That's why it's so important that we very clearly declare and understand who our Lord is speaking these promises to. His very authority, and His power and His credibility depends on it. This is the very mind, the very will, the very purpose and the very work of God, right here in Ephesians 1, this is what He came to do. This is who He came to do it for, and this is what He did, all right? Ephesians 1, if you're following me, back in Ephesians 1 here, verse one says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ "by the will of God to the saints which are at Ephesus "and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, "grace be to you." I love that line. I just love that line. What does grace mean? You hear the word grace everywhere. Everyone knows the song "Amazing Grace," what does grace mean? The word grace means free gift. That's what it means. Free gift. Verse two says, "Grace, be to you and peace." Grace and peace. What does peace mean? Here's what it means. When you look up the word, it means truce. It means unity. It means reconciliation. It means friendship. It means accord. Peace. Verse two says, "Grace, be to you "and peace from God our Father, "and from the Lord Jesus Christ." They, Father, Son, and Spirit, three persons, one God. When we say He, we mean They. And when we say They, we mean He. I don't understand that, but that's so. I believe it. They are the ones. He is the one who authored grace and peace, God almighty. Father, Son, and Spirit, They are the ones who executed grace and peace. They are the ones who brought grace and peace to us, not us to Them, Them to us. Again, Salvation is of the Lord. The Lord. Three persons, one God, one Lord. Salvation's of the Lord, start to finish, salvation is of God. It's something He purposed in His mind. He purposed to do this. He purposed it in His mind and in His heart before He ever made the world, He purposed to create a world and we're standing on it and He did it. And before He ever created this world, He purposed in His mind and heart to save a particular people. He did that before he ever made people. He purposed to save people before He ever made people. Well, how did He know they would need saving? He's God. He's God. The Lamb of God is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Before God ever made a people, He provided a salvation. He provided a savior for those people. Salvation is God's doing from the beginning, from the start. Look at verse one, it says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, "to the saints which are at Ephesus "and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, "grace be to you and peace from God our Father, "and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Verse three says, "Blessed be the God "and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings "in heavenly places, in Christ." That's a glorious verse of scripture. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings "in heavenly places, in Christ." The only way that a sinner, I am a sinner, you are a sinner, all have sinned. The only way that a sinner can receive a blessing from God is by being in Christ. That's the only way. It's not gonna be in a sinner's good works. A lot of people think that's where it comes from. How could I receive a blessing from God? "Well, I'll receive it in my good works. "I'll receive it in my good deeds. "I'll receive it in turning over a new leaf "and being a better person." That's not so. That's not so. It's only gonna be in Christ. It's not gonna be in our own good works. It's not gonna be in a sinner's church membership. "Well, I want to be saved and I wanna receive the blessing. "So what do I do? "Well, I'll join a church." Salvation's not in joining a church. I believe every soul on this earth ought to worship God and be a member of His true congregation. I'm not for people not assembling with the saints but that's not where salvation is. It's not gonna be in what a sinner gives. "Well, I wanna be saved, "so I'll give my money, and I'll give my time "and I'll give my talents and we'll do humanitarian work." I think humanitarian work's wonderful but salvation's not in that. It's not

gonna be in what a sinner gives up. "Well, I know I shouldn't be doing this "and I know I shouldn't have this, "and so I'm gonna give all this up. "I'm gonna cut all this out "and become a monk on a mountain somewhere." Salvation's not in that. Salvation is only by being in Christ. The blessings of God only come in Christ. Now, what does that mean? What is it to be in Christ? What is it to be in Christ? Well, here's what it is. It's to be chosen in Him by the Father. It's to be predestinated in Him. It's to be adopted in Him. It's to be accepted in Him. It's to be redeemed in Him. It's to be forgiven in Him. That's what it is to be in Christ, and that's what Ephesians 1 tells us right here. All right, let's just quickly read down through this. Verse one says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ "by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, "and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, "grace be to you and peace from God our Father, "and from the Lord Jesus Christ. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings "in heavenly places, in Christ." Verse four says, "According as He hath chosen us in Him," in Christ, "before the foundation of the world "that we should be holy and without blame "before Him in love." Now, who chose who? Men are always telling people, "Now you need to make your choice. "You need to make your decision." Now, wait a minute, who chooses who? Just listen to John 15:16. The Lord Jesus Christ said to his disciples, "You have not chosen me "but I have chosen you and ordained you." "I have chosen you." He did all of the choosing in salvation. There was only one choice made in our salvation and it was the choice of the Lord, our God. It was His decision. He did the choosing and when did our text say He did the choosing? Well, Romans 9 says, in verse 11, it says, "The children being not yet born." This is speaking of Jacob and Esau. That's who it's speaking of. "The children being not yet born, "neither having done any good or evil "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, "not of works, but of Him that calleth, "it was said unto her, ""The elder shall serve the younger." "As it is written, "Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated." Now, when was that? Before they were ever born. Before any soul was born. That's when God did the choosing. Why did God do it that way? Why did He do it then? Well, our text, Ephesians 1:4 says, according as "He hath chosen us in Him "before the foundation of the world "that we should be holy and without blame "before Him in love." We were chosen, then, to be purified, to be washed, to be guiltless, to be holy and without blame. Verse five says, "Having predestinated us "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." He predestinated us. Why did He do it before the foundation of the world? Because everything about us had to be predestinated to the Lord Jesus Christ. Predestinated to adoption. In our sin, we would've never brought ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. So the Father did that for us. He predetermined everything about us what we would be, where we would be how we would be, predestinated. Predestinated. Years ago, there was a preacher who went into... He had a television broadcast just like this, and he went into a grocery store or a gas station and there was a man behind the register there and he had a Bible on the counter and this preacher saw that Bible, and he said to him "That's a nice Bible you have." And the man said, "Thank you." He said, "I know who you are, "you're the preacher on television." And the preacher said, "Yes." He said, "You believe in predestination, don't you?" And the man said, "Well, I believe so. "What does the Bible say about it?" And the man said, "Well, I don't know." He said, "Well, let me say your Bible there." And he opened it up here to Ephesians 1, and he read verse five to him, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children "by Jesus Christ to Himself." He read in verse 11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance "being predestinated according to the purpose "of Him who worketh all things "after the council of His own will." He

took him over to Romans 8, where it says, "Whom He did foreknow before the world, He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. The preacher said, "Oh, so predestination "is what conforms us to the image of Christ." He said, "You wanna be like Christ, don't you?" And the man said, "Oh, yeah." He said, "Well, then you believe in predestination too." If we want to come to the Lord Jesus Christ if we want to end the end in glory be just like the holy, spotless Lamb of God we must be predestinated to it. Thank God, that's exactly what He did. Verse five says, "Having predestinated us "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself. Why did he do it that way? It goes on to say "According to the good pleasure of His will." He did it that way because that's what He wanted to do. This is God we're talking about. This is God we're dealing with. He does whatever He wants to do. That's what God does. God does whatever God wants to do. If it is according to the good pleasure of His will, that's what He does. Isaiah 43 says, "No one can stop Him," and it says, "He doesn't have to get permission from anybody." King Nebuchadnezzar said in Daniel 4:35, "He does according to His will in the armies of heaven "and among the inhabitants of the earth "and none can stay His hand or saying unto Him "'What doest Thou?'" No one can stop Him. No one can question Him. This is God. This is God Almighty. Everything that He did for undeserving sinners like us, He didn't do it because we earned it. He didn't do it because we deserved it. He did not owe it to us in any way, shape or form. It was just according to the good pleasure of His will. That's why verse six says, "This is all to the praise of the glory of His grace." It was all His free gift, therefore, He gets all the glory for it. Verse six says, "To the praise of the glory of His grace "wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." "Christ bore our sins in His body on the tree, "therefore removing all of us from us." And the moment they were gone, God, the Father said, "Welcome in," accepted in the beloved, in Christ. Verse seven says, "In whom, in the Lord Jesus Christ, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. Do you know why God's chosen sinners are forgiven? It's not because of anything we've done. It's because of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the reason why. What can wash away my sins? What can make me whole again? What can redeem me and cause God to forgive me? Nothing but the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Oh, precious is the flow that made me white as snow, "no other fount I know, "nothing but the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ." Isn't that wonderful news? That's the mind, and heart, and will, and purpose and work of our God. That's what He chose to do for sinners and that's what He did. And if He's caused us to believe it and to bow to it, He did it for us. Every soul that He did this for, He draws to Himself by causing them to cry out to Him, "I believe." I pray that may be the case for us.