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Sermon Notes

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## **God's Glorious Plan of Salvation**

### **Ephesians 1:11-14**

This morning we come to one of the most amazingly deep assertions of the sovereignty of God over all things in this world. This concept will never stop challenging your brain, your heart, your ideas about God... It is a stunningly powerful idea, and this morning, I want to stretch your conceptions of God's active rule in this world so that you will feel more prone to WORSHIP HIM for your salvation than you ever have before

#### **I. God's Sovereignty: Planning and Working Everything (vs. 11)**

##### **A. One Long, Majestic Sentence Continues**

1. In the Greek, Ephesians 1:3-14 is all one long amazing, glorious sentence
2. That sentence carries so many amazing insights and doctrinal megaton bombs that it is really impossible to preach it in one sermon... but it is one sentence
3. It continues here in verses 11-14

##### **B. The Infinite Complexity of the Sovereignty of Almighty God**

1. These verses carry us into some of the deepest theological waters we can ever seek to navigate; swim in, plumb the depths of
2. The ideas in these verses are vastly beyond anyone's ability finally to comprehend
3. They have been the source of much controversy between Christians over the years
  - a. Many have struggled with predestination, divine sovereignty, especially in salvation, especially in how that salvation relates to human freedom
  - b. Many have argued for this or that position, and some of those arguments have been heated and in some cases, Christians have acted most unchristian with each other

4. As a result of their complexity, profundity, and the controversies, many Christians think the BEST thing they can do is stay away from this topic altogether... never read about it, never discuss it, never carefully exegete the key passages, never listen to sermons about it
5. Some pastors get into trouble preaching carefully through Ephesians 1
6. BUT to ignore any section of God's Word as though it's harmful or toxic or dangerous is to dishonor God greatly
7. God GAVE US this chapter... He WANTS US to understand it... He WANTS US to ponder it in detail and have it stretch our understandings

***2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness***

C. How to Approach this Teaching of God's Absolute Sovereignty?

1. Without prejudices or philosophical schemes that slant the way you take in bible verses

So many people come to this issue with preconceived notions and commitments

In effect, they have made up their mind before they ever look at a passage like this

Martyn Lloyd-Jones: "We all tend to start with original or inherited ideas as to what God should do, what it is right for God to do, and if God does not behave in that way, then we impute unfairness to him."

Jonathan Edwards: From my childhood up; my mind has been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life; and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure.... And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this... divine sovereignty is what I LOVE to ascribe to God... but at first, it was not so."

2. So how do we get rid of our prejudices? How do we simply accept the ideas in these verses?
3. Approach with GREAT HUMILITY and with simple child-like faith

***Romans 9:20 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'"***

4. Realize that these doctrines can only be accepted by CHRISTIANS!

***1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.***

5. Seek a view of salvation that MAXIMIZES the glory of God!

So... what does Paul assert here about God in these verses?

First...

D. In Him (Christ) We Have Obtained an Inheritance

1. Only IN CHRIST do we get anything but wrath from God
2. Every blessing of salvation is blood-bought
3. Next... what does this verse actually say?
  - a. Complex word leads to many different translations

***KJV, NASB, ESV Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance***

***NIV Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen***

***HCSB Ephesians 1:11 In Him we were also made His inheritance***

- b. The word literally means to be appointed or chosen by lot, so some excellent commentators think it means “we were claimed by God as HIS portion”

***Deuteronomy 32:9 For the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.***

- c. But the focus here seems to be on OUR inheritance, for a few verses later

***Ephesians 1:14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance***

E. God Has Purposed All of these Things by His Own Counsel

***Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will***

1. We were predestined

- a. Already discussed this briefly in verses 4-5

***“in love, he predestined us to be adopted...”***

- b. The word means to predetermine, to fix by decree
  - c. God has thought of us individually, personally, by name, and in Christ fixed out future for us... that we will be with Him eternally in heavenly glory
2. That predestination of our final glory in heaven is part of God’s overall grand and detailed plan for the entire universe

3. God HAS A PLAN

- a. None of this was haphazard or left to random chance
- b. God has PONDERED EVERY TINY DETAIL before anything came to be
- c. The word “plan” is linked with the phrase the “purpose (or counsel) of his will”
- d. The image is of a royal conference in which all the King’s counsellors are called in to give him wise advice
- e. BUT in God’s case, there were NO COUNSELLORS outside of Himself

***Romans 11:34 "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"***

- f. No created being in the universe can ever give God information that He didn’t already possess... or put things together in analysis in a way he hadn’t considered; no one can add anything at all to the mind of God... God has THOUGHT THROUGH every aspect of his universe, down to the subatomic level, and down to the tiniest moment of history
- g. God’s plan is absolutely COMPREHENSIVE...

***Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will***

- h. If you think that word “everything” is limited in some way to just some things, or aspects of salvation, or inanimate objects, it isn’t
- i. Other verses testify to this plainly:

***Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.***

[No such thing as luck... every roll of the dice comes us exactly as God wills]

*Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.*

Not a single bird dies on planet earth apart from the plan and purpose of God

The interconnectedness of both living and non-living things on this planet is so pervasive that even scientists understand the massive effects of the tiniest detail on world-changing events

“Chaos theory” pioneer Edward Lorenz, mathematician and meteorologist, working with statistical models of WEATHER... coined a term “the butterfly effect”: that the details of a hurricane (such as when it started and the exact path it would follow) could be altered by the flapping of the wings of a distant butterfly several weeks earlier

Sci-Fi writer Ray Bradbury actually used this concept in a short-story a decade before Lorenz quoted it; he wrote a short story, “A Sound of Thunder” in which a man who loved hunting paid a time travel hunting company for the hunting trip of a lifetime... the ability to go back in time and kill a Tyrannosaurus Rex... but he was told he had to stay on this levitating path the company had built and only kill the specific Tyrannosaurus marked out that would have died at that moment in time... but the man stepped off the path; and when he got back to his own time, many significant things had changed dramatically. It turns out that when he took that single step off the path, he had killed a single butterfly, and that changed history dramatically

For want of a nail the shoe was lost.

For want of a shoe the horse was lost.

For want of a horse the rider was lost.

For want of a rider the message was lost.

For want of a message the battle was lost.

For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.

And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

Seemingly insignificant events can have HUGE impacts:

SO... if God is going to control any aspect of history, he must control every aspect leading up to that event... or He really can have no control whatsoever

This is not just theory... God says he DOES control all events of history, and all plans of humanity, even by great kings or insignificant peasants

***Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.***

***Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.***

4. Not only does God make comprehensive PLANS, He then acts powerfully to bring them about

***Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,***

The sovereign power of God to act in history, to interact with people on a moment by moment basis and bring about his intentions, is essential to his sovereign rule over the world

God doesn't stand aloof and then swoop in at key moments... he is energetic, with irresistible power, to make his plan come about, even down to the detailed level

***Isaiah 14:26-27 This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations. <sup>27</sup> For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?***

See... there is a PURPOSE... and a POWER... his heart loves, his mind plans, his hand brings about that wise and loving plan

#### F. Applied to Our Salvation

1. To bring the elect to faith in Christ involved God moving the pieces on the incredibly complex chess board of history into place
2. God positions this person at this time to be ready to answer this question or make this comment
3. And no, we're not robots... people do all of these things according to their own nature... whether good or bad; wicked rulers condemn a missionary to death, but the missionary preaches the gospel to the guards in the cell before being led out to his execution, and then seals his witness by dying in faith and love and the BLOOD OF MARTYRS was again SEED FOR THE CHURCH!
4. This kind of detailed providential rule is going on every moment of every hour of every day of every year... year after year, century after century; until ALL THE ELECT are safely in heaven

Next... Paul addresses a marvelous aspect of that plan... how it moved from Jew only to Jew + Gentile; and that all of this had been part of God's plan

## II. God's Order: We, First, then You Also (vs. 12-13)

***Ephesians 1:11-13 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.***

### A. Lots of Debate about "We" and "You"

1. Key phrase: "We who were the FIRST TO HOPE IN CHRIST...:"
2. Then it moves to "You also were included in Christ when you heard the gospel and believed it"
3. So there is this movement from WE to YOU
4. Who is the "WE" who were the first to hope in Christ???

  - a. It could just refer to Paul and the other evangelists who brought the gospel to the lost Ephesians
  - b. Those who advocate that say that the "we" in verses 3-10 refers to ALL CHRISTIANS, so how could the "we" of verse 12 refer only to Jewish Christians
  - c. But I think no matter how you cut it, you're going to understand "us" and "we" differently from verses 3-10 and verse 11

***Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace***

The "we" of verse 7 is everyone who was elect in verses 3-4... it's all Christians

But the "we" of verse 12 is in direct contrast to the "you" of verse 13... so it can't mean "every single Christian"

- d. Best way to understand this is in light of verse 10, and Ephesians 2:11-22

Verse 10 speaks of God bringing together into perfect unity things that were disunited, not in harmony with each other

***Ephesians 1:10 to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.***

And one of the key issues was the Jew-Gentile division:

***Ephesians 2:11-14*** *Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)--<sup>12</sup> remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.<sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility*

B. God's Beautiful Order: To the Jew First

***Romans 1:16*** *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

***John 4:22*** *You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.*

1. God called Abram from Ur of the Chaldees and revealed himself to him
2. He made a marvelous promise

***Genesis 12:3*** *all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*

3. Christ is the fulfillment of that promise

***Galatians 3:14*** *He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*

4. Gentile believers become children of Abraham by faith

C. The Jews were the "First to Hope in Christ"

D. Then, In God's Time, the Gospel Moved Out to the Gentiles

1. God called the Apostle to the Jews, Peter, to go to Cornelius's house and preach the gospel to a house full of Gentiles
2. While Peter was preaching the gospel, the Holy Spirit came on all who were listening by faith to that marvelous message

E. Then God Called Paul to Be the Apostle to the Gentiles and Unleashed Him on the Gentile World

F. In Christ, there is ONE NEW MAN... "Christian"

1. In the Gospel, God has brought the two into oneness
2. So We/You is a beautiful



### III. God's Means: The Gospel and the Spirit (vs. 13)

***Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit***

***ESV Ephesians 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit***

#### A. God's Eternal Plan Comes into Time

#### B. Sovereignty DOESN'T DESTROY Evangelism... it EMPOWERS IT

1. Some people say, "If the elect are predestined to be saved, then nothing needs to be done... God will do it all himself."
2. Others say in a similar vein, "A strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God sucks the life out of evangelism. Because then people won't share the gospel because there's no need."
3. But no one in the history of the church had a higher view of the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation than the apostle Paul AND no one in the history of the church worked harder in evangelism and missions than Paul
4. Paul WROTE the doctrine we're studying here... he WROTE the words that the elect are predestined for their final inheritance
5. AND Paul relentlessly laid down his life to win the elect to Christ

***1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them-- yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.***

***2 Corinthians 11:23 Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again.***

***2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.***

So... a firm grip on election and predestination actually EMPOWERS evangelism... you reach out with the gospel knowing that God WILL USE the gospel to win the elect

#### C. God Ordains MEANS by Which the Elect Are Saved

1. The end is that 100% of the elect will end up in heaven

2. The MEANS is explained plainly here...

***Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit***

***ESV Ephesians 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit***

3. Messengers of the gospel are SENT OUT

Romans 10 makes this same pattern clear as well:

***Romans 10:13-15 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." <sup>14</sup> ¶ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup> And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"***

4. The message of the gospel is proclaimed plainly and clearly so it can be HEARD and understood

a. Paul calls it “the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation...”

b. “Salvation” from sin... from the WRATH TO COME

Plain proclamation of the TRUTH of their sin

***Romans 3:10-18 "There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." <sup>13</sup> "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." <sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." <sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know." <sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes."***

The TRUTH about the grave danger they are in:

***1 Thessalonians 1:10 Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.***

c. It is the clear message of Jesus Christ... incarnate... sinless... miracle-working... substitutionary death... bodily resurrection

d. The word of truth about simple repentance and faith:

***Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"***

- e. This is the WORD OF TRUTH...
  - f. It is what separates Christians from non-Christians all over the world
  - g. It is the only power that can truly unite Jews and Gentiles, or even truly unite any two sinners or any group of sinners and truly make them one
  - h. The gospel is the WORD OF TRUTH, the power of God for salvation
  - i. It is NECESSARY for human salvation, but it not sufficient... something MORE is needed
5. The Holy Spirit must work regeneration in the hearts of the elect
- a. He must anoint the proclamation of the gospel with his internal moving power
  - b. He must take out the heart of stone and give the heart of flesh
  - c. He must speak LIGHT into the darkened heart of a human being AS THEY ARE HEARING the word of truth, the gospel
  - d. And if He does that, the sinner WILL SEE THE INVISIBLE SPIRITUAL LIGHT and be saved
6. They BELIEVE and are immediately justified (forgiven, seen to be righteous)
7. Then they are SEALED with the Holy Spirit

#### IV. God's Seal: The Promised Holy Spirit (vs. 13-14)

***Ephesians 1:13-14 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,<sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.***

- A. What Does the Phrase "the Promised Holy Spirit" mean?
- 1. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity
  - 2. His unique role in the work of salvation is to take the finished work of Christ on behalf of the elect whom the Father chose and APPLY it to those elect personally and individually
  - 3. He was PROMISED in the Old Testament in many places

***Isaiah 44:3 For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.***

***Joel 2:28-29 'And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. <sup>29</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.***

4. Also promised clearly in the New Testament as well

a. By John the Baptist

***Matthew 3:11 "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.***

b. By Jesus Christ

***Luke 11:13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"***

***John 14:16-17 I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.***

***Luke 24:49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."***

c. By Peter on the day of Pentecost

***Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.***

***Acts 2:38-39 "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call."***

B. What Does it Mean to be “Sealed” with the Holy Spirit?

1. We will discuss this much more in detail next week
2. Basically, the “sealing of the Spirit” means “AUTHENTICATING PROOF” that you are a child of God
3. We will show this more next week

C. Fundamentally, the Spirit is Given as a Gift to Every Christian

***Romans 8:9 ¶ You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.***

D. The “Sealing” Happens in Many Ways to Assure You that You are a Child of God

***Romans 8:15-16 you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.***

Next week... what does it mean that the Spirit is given as a “deposit guaranteeing our full inheritance”???

V. God’s Purpose: The Praise of His Glory (vs. 12, 14)

A. The Ultimate End: The Praise of God’s Glory

B. The Trinity Works Differently and Shares Glory Equally

1. The phrase “the praise of His glory” appears three times (1:6, 1:12, 1:14)

***Ephesians 1:4-6 In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace***

***Ephesians 1:12 in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.***

***Ephesians 1:13-14 And you also were included in Christ... to the praise of his glory***

2. Each at the end of a section which focuses on a separate member of the Trinity

3. God the Father (1:3-6) makes the eternal plan...

4. God the Son, Jesus Christ (1:7-12) carries out the plan, shedding his blood and redeeming his people

5. God the Spirit (1:13-14) applies the plan to individual people, converting them and sealing them

C. God Does All of This “for His Own Glory”

1. God does everything for His glory

a. What does that mean?

b. The radiant display of God’s perfections... God’s attributes

- c. God puts His power on display... His wisdom... His sovereignty... His patience... His kindness and compassion... His justice... His love
- 2. God especially works salvation for His elect for His own glory
- 3. The phrase here: "to the praise of His glory"
  - a. Not only that God's actions would be on display radiantly
  - b. BUT MORE... that we, created in His image, redeemed by the blood of His Son, converted and sealed by the Holy Spirit might SEE the glory of God in all of this and PRAISE HIM for it
  - c. That we would be lost in wonder, admiration, joy, adulation... and PRAISE HIM... speak out of His greatness, and sing praise to His name
  - d. In heaven, we will spend our time doing precisely this... falling down before Him at aspects of His glory and worshipping Him for each one
  - e. "to the praise of His glory"
  - f. That's why God does all of this... He wants us, His created and redeemed children, to find our highest and greatest joy and reason for existence in drinking in His glory, especially in the astonishingly deep and wise and powerful plan of salvation
  - g. He wants to give us an eternal gift: HIS OWN GLORY, the highest and best gift He can ever give us
  - h. By saving us in this way, He has freed us completely from self-focus; we realize that He alone deserves the praise for our salvation

***1 Corinthians 1:30-31 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God-- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. <sup>31</sup> Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."***

- i. God wants to free our hearts from all idols, all lesser objects of esteem, including OURSELVES... and set us free to swim in a sea of His own glory
- j. It is normal for us, created in His image, with minds and hearts that can UNDERSTAND what God did in making this plan, what Christ did in shedding His blood to fulfill this plan, what the Spirit did in applying this plan to us individually... it is normal for us who are capable of taking this in to be FILLED WITH WONDER and AMAZEMENT at it, and then to SPEAK, SING, SHOUT in PRAISE for this glory

- k. Anything else would be evidence of severe spiritual DISEASE, even worse, of spiritual DEADNESS... and that is exactly what God in saving us has freed us from!!
- l. God is SO GENEROUS in all of this... He doesn't NEED to do this for His self-esteem, but out of a lavishly generous spirit toward us, He wants us in heaven to exist forever praising His glory

## VI. Applications

### A. Come to Christ!

1. The text makes it plain that the eternal plan of God enters into time with the process of evangelism
2. When someone tells another person the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that person hears that gospel, understands, and believes, that's when their sins are forgiven and they are ADOPTED as a son or daughter of the living God... and they receive the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit
3. "When you HEARD the word of truth, the GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION... HAVING BELIEVED, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit
4. HAS THIS HAPPENED TO YOU???
5. You've heard the gospel this very morning... hear it again
  - a. God: created the universe, made it all very good; made laws by which the universe is governed
  - b. Man: created in God's image; we rebelled against the commands of God and fell into sin; we deserve DEATH for our sins
  - c. Christ: is God's only begotten Son; fully God, fully man; lived a sinless life, died an atoning death on the cross; rose on the third day; ascended to heaven, he sits on the right hand of God
  - d. Response: if you repent of your sins and trust in Christ, you will be saved!

### B. Stand Amazed at the PLAN and the POWER

1. God has made an incredibly intricate and detailed plan for the human race, for all of human history
2. That PLAN is like a BLUEPRINT for an amazing display of His glory and for the building of an incredible holy city in heaven... every tiny thing has been pondered

3. The POWER of God cannot be thwarted and God is working out that detailed plan
4. Be amazed at this one statement

***Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will***

5. Trust in God more than ever before! Even the tiniest details have been worked out
6. PRAY for the Lord with a bold sense of confidence that God can work in their souls
7. Don't murmur against God when things start to go wrong!

***Matthew 10:29-31 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. <sup>30</sup> And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup> So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.***

DON'T BE AFRAID!!! Trust God

C. Parents: teach your children the details of the sovereignty of God

1. Don't shrink back from unfolding deep truths to them
2. They will be blessed their whole lives by a faithful understanding of the incredible sovereignty of God over tiny details

D. Marvel at the Work of God in Unifying Jews and Gentiles in Christ... the incredible sequencing of "to the Jew first, then to the Gentile"

E. Next week: More about the SEALING with the Spirit

1. But... begin even this week seeking more and more of the sense of the Spirit in your life