Ephesians 1

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:
2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,
4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;

**CHOSEN TO BE HOLY**

God chose us that we should be holy. The words “holy” and “holiness” have been spoiled by today’s Christian teachings. Your understanding of holiness is probably influenced by these teachings. In the Bible the word “holy” should not be understood according to our natural concept. Many think that holiness is sinlessness. According to this concept, someone is holy if he does not sin. This thought is absolutely mistaken. Holiness is neither sinlessness nor perfection. Holy not only means sanctified, separated unto God, but also different, distinct, from everything that is common. Only God is different, distinct, from all things. Hence, He is holy; holiness is His nature.

The way God makes us holy is to impart Himself, the Holy One, into us so that our whole being may be permeated and saturated with His holy nature. For us, God’s chosen ones, to be holy is to partake of His divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) and to have our whole being permeated with God Himself. This is different from mere sinlessness or sinless purity. This makes our being holy, like God Himself in His nature and in His character.

**God Being Holy**

To be holy is to be separated from everything other than God. It also means to be different, distinct, from all that is not God. Thus, we should not be common, but different. In the universe God alone is holy. He is different from everything else and is distinct. Therefore, to be holy means to be one with God. To be sinless or perfect is not the same as being holy. To be holy we need to be one with God because only God is holy (Lev. 11:44; 1 Sam. 2:2).

**To Be Separated unto God Positionally**

In order for us to be holy, we first need to be separated unto God positionally. With respect to our family, neighbors, colleagues, and friends, we need to be...
separated. Many Christians, however, are saved, but not separated. Normally, once a person is saved, he should also be separated. This is the reason a believer is called a saint. Consider the majority of Christians today. They are virtually the same as the worldly people. With them, there is no separation. Many of their relatives and friends do not even know that they are Christians. But to be holy is to be separated unto God. This, of course, is a matter of position.

Saturated with God Dispositionally

Now we come to dispositional sanctification, which comes after justification (Rom. 6:19, 22). This is sanctification not merely in our position, but also in our disposition. Hence, it is deeper and more subjective than positional sanctification.

In subjective sanctification we are saturated with God dispositionally. Separation can take place rather easily and in a very short time. But to be saturated dispositionally takes a long time. If we are faithful to the Lord, we shall be saturated with the nature of God day after day. God intends to saturate us with Himself, and we need to soak up God in our being. This requires time. This is the process of being made holy.

I do not care for outward correction; it means nothing. Being saturated with God and being soaked with Him, however, mean a great deal. I do not appreciate self-correction. Suppose someone is proud and adjusts himself to be humble. This means nothing. The only thing that matters is that we are saturated with God. What a joy it is for me to see that many brothers and sisters have been saturated with God, that they have soaked up so much of Him into their being! This is the holiness, the sanctification, revealed in the Bible.

PREDESTINATED UNTO SONSHIP

In verse 4 we see that God has chosen us to be holy. However, to be holy is the procedure, not the goal. The goal is sonship. We have been predestinated unto sonship. In other words, God has chosen us to be holy so that we might be His sons. Thus, to be holy is the process, the procedure, whereas to be sons of God is the goal. God does not merely want a group of holy people; He desires many sons. It may seem to us that it is adequate for God to choose us to be holy. We may be fully satisfied with this. Nevertheless, God has chosen us to be holy for a purpose, and this purpose is that we might be the sons of God.

Let us take baking a cake as an example. When a sister bakes a cake, she firstly prepares the dough by mixing various ingredients together with flour.
As the ingredients are mixed in with the dough, we may say that the dough is a picture of sanctification. First the dough is separated; then it is sanctified through having various ingredients added to it. After the sister mixes the dough, she shapes it into a certain form. Likewise, God first separates us, and then puts Himself, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, into us. Then follows the process of mixing. To say that God mixes us means that He disturbs us. We may like to have a tranquil church life, but often God intervenes to turn things upside down. Nevertheless, this is the normal Christian church life.

To be holy is to be mingled with God. God sanctifies us by putting Himself into us and then mingling us with His nature. This is a matter of nature, of having our nature transformed with His. We were born human, natural, but God wants us to be divine. The only way this can take place is through having the divine nature put into our being and mingled with it. In this way, God makes us holy. Thus, sanctification is a procedure to transform our nature. This, however, is not the goal. The goal is related to being formed or shaped. This is the reason that along with God’s choosing us to be holy, there is the need of His predestinating us to be sons. To be holy is a matter of nature, but to be sons is a matter of being formed. God’s sons are people conformed to a particular form or shape

**Study Questions**

1. What is the difference between holiness and sinlessness?
2. What are some ways for us to practice living a sanctified life?
3. What is the difference between God choosing us to be holy and predestinating us unto sonship?

**Daily Verses for Enjoyment**

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<td>2 Pet. 1:4</td>
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[1- Upon waking-up; 2- on the bus; 3- during a study break; 4- while grabbing a meal; 5 – before bed]