

Read 1:1-14

- v. 1-2 This was Paul's typical greeting formula. Why were the Ephesians called "saints?"
- v. 3 What does it mean that God has blessed us "in the heavenly places?"
- v. 4 When did God choose us, and what does that fact tell you about him?
- v. 5 Why did he "predestine" us to be his?

A controversy arose which divided some conservative American Lutherans a little over a century ago. Dr. C.F.W. Walther, head of the Missouri Synod, taught that we are elected entirely out of God's grace. Professors from the Ohio Synod protested that God elected/predestined us "in view of faith." Led by Dr. A. Hoenecke, the Wisconsin Synod supported Walther. What is the danger in saying "God elected me because he saw from the beginning that I would believe"?

- v. 6 The "one he loves" is: _____

What are some of the difficult questions that the doctrine of predestination (election) often raises?

Yet, rather than focus on those difficulties or debate them, what does Paul do with this teaching here in verses 4-6?

- v. 7 What is "redemption" according to this verse?
- v. 9 Paul talks here about the "mystery of [God's] will." What does he mean by that?
- v. 10 What "things" did God "bring together" in Christ?
- v. 13 How did they come to faith?
- v. 14 Compare the two uses of the word "redemption" in this verse and verse 7.

Did you find the Trinity in this section? Where?

So, as you look back on verses 3-14, find some things that God has done for us in Christ (note the repeated use of the phrase "in him").

Read 1:15-23

v. 16 What caused Paul to give God thanks?

v. 17 Do you see the Trinity here, too?

What is Paul asking for when he asked God to give the Ephesians "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation?"

v. 18 Can you explain the interesting word picture, "eyes of your heart?"

v. 20 Is it better to say, "God raised Christ" or to say "Christ rose from the dead"?

v. 22 Who benefits from Christ's rule?

What can you point to in the world today to support the doctrine that Christ is ruling the world in the interests of his Church?

What might someone point to in denial of this fact?

v. 23 Why is the Church called Jesus' body?