

The Big Twelve
The School of The Gathering
Ephesians 1:10

We started this series from Ephesians chapter 1: verses 3-14 on May 22, 2013

-We are calling this: 'The Big Twelve' series

-This is a Big Twelve Conference of Schools and each school, each verse stands alone but is very connected to sister schools before and after it.

-A school name has been assigned to each of the twelve to help us remember them

-Today we will be in School #8, The School of The Gathering

-in **Ephesians 1:10**, it reads:

10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

Our Recap of the Big Twelve schools covered to date starts in v. 3 of Ephesians Chapter 1

-these 12 verses, 12 schools if you will, are broken up into 3 sections following the order of the NAME in **Matthew 28:19: go in The Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit**

We see here in Eph. 1:3-14 this same order

in vs. 3-6 we see the role of the Father as the planner and designer,

in vs. 7-12 we see the role of the Son as the one who executes the plan,

in vs. 13-14 we see the role of the Holy Spirit as the one who applies the finished work of the Son to mankind,

let's review the verses and the schools we have covered to date....

Over 3 years ago we unwrapped and peeled back the great learning of the first school

#1: The School of Blessing, Ephesians 1:3

we read in **Eph. 1:3 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,**

-A school obviously attended by Paul and all who call the Father 'Blessed'.

-Three times we read 'blessed' or 'blessing'

-A school completed by those who understand how non-blessed we were before Christ and how humbly and greatly blessed we are now!

-We often need a refresher course from this school

we then carefully attended our second school.....

#2 The School of the Chosen, Ephesians 1:4

we read in... **v.4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, (why?) in order that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,**

-His purpose in choosing us 'before time': That we should be holy or set a part unto Him for His work and to be without blame standing before Him, facing Him as a bondservant, in an atmosphere of love

-We discovered the purpose of God in even revealing the concept of election to us and it is very simple....

-He could have saved us without ever speaking of Election or being 'Chosen' before 'time had a beginning'

-But He has spoken of Election and here is a key reason why...

-He chose us long before we were born so that there would be no boasting on the one hand and no self-condemnation on the other...we read in.....

.....Rom. 9:11 (for *the children* not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election or choice might stand, that His election is not of works but solely of Him who calls),

-And in this context He is choosing a nation to represent Him to the World ... a nation with which to bring forth His Son into the world

-Let not Jacob who is the nation 'Israel' boast over his brother Esau who is the nation 'Edom'

-For we read in **Genesis 25:23**

23 And the LORD said to her (*Rebekah*):

"Two nations are in your womb,

Two peoples shall be separated from your body;

One people shall be stronger than the other,

And the older shall serve the younger."

-His election here is not about choosing one for eternal life versus the other not receiving eternal life

-His election is about purpose, usefulness and He does it before we have done any good or evil.

-In Eph. 2:9 he repeats this principle of why we have no part in our salvation other than to believe:

not of works, lest anyone should boast.

-Election does not save us, but it gives us great comfort knowing that God chose us before we did any good or evil,

-In our verse what is His purpose in choosing or electing us before the foundations of the world?

-v. 4 reads: *in order* that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

-‘Holy’ signifies a clean vessel set apart for His use, His purposes.

-And we stand before Him as a bondservant without blame, in love with our master, awaiting instructions

-And the first thing He tells us as we stand before Him is in our next school

-that we are not just Holy bondservants set apart for His use ...

But He sends us to the school that gives us our highest identity

#3 The School of Adopted Children, Ephesians 1:5

we read in **v.5** in love having predestined us (*believers, bondservants*) to adoption as sons by or thru Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His, the Father's, will,

-we are not just before Him holy and without blame as servants but a family member holy & without blame.....

-**predestination** as we learned in this school, only applies to believers.

-In no way does God predestine unbelievers to be what they are,

-but unbelievers choose to be what they are and what they do and where they are going.

-And God holds them accountable for their choices.

-Does He know the eternal destiny they will choose?

-Certainly, but foreknowledge is not predestination.

-He predestines no one to Hell, that is a personal choice

-**But** we learned in this school that He does, as the word implies, predestine the boundaries of our lives as adopted sons and daughters with five primary purposes in mind:

#1-in **Romans 8:29** we were **predestined** to be conformed to the image of His son Jesus Christ,

-no matter what it takes, you will be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ

-All tools, whether good or bad or His to use to shape into the likeness of Jesus

#2-in **Romans 8:30** He **predestined** us and the steps in between to make it all the way to glorification.
-nothing will stop Him or us because it is His purpose for us, He will carry it out, we will reach the finish line

#3-In our verse... **Ephesians 1:5**, He **predestines** us to adoption as adult children,
-We are legally and forever His children, and this cannot change....

#4 in **Romans 8:23** we learn that the end of the Adoption process is the receiving of a new eternal, adult body, a body like Jesus' body,

#5-and finally in **Ephesians 1:11**: In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being **predestined** to this inheritance according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

WOW! If ever there was an undeserved inheritance this would be it.

-But I'll receive it.

-Amen!

We came then to our fourth school ...

#4 The School of Acceptance, Ephesians 1:6

-we read in v.6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which **He made us accepted** in the Beloved.

-Even children do not always feel accepted

-BUT He made us accepted

-in v. 6 This word 'accepted' is very special.....

-The Greek word 'accepted' in this passage is used of Mary in Luke 1:28: there it is: '**Highly favored one**'

-The Holy Spirit in our verse speaks similarly about us, as the 'accepted', as 'highly favored ones'

-Now we are not only chosen, Holy or set-apart, without blame, predestined for glory and adopted into His family, awaiting the perfect body, and not just accepted BUT Highly Favored Ones....

V.6 ends the Father's PLAN of our Salvation in our 12 verses ...

-and starting in v.7 we enter into the role of the Son in executing the Father's Plan

That brings us to our 5th School,

#5 The School of Redemption, Ephesians 1:7

We read in... **v.7 In Him alone we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace**

-when fully un-layered, Redemption means: 'deliverance and freedom thru the payment of a ransom'.

-**Redemption**: deals with the sin problem, the world's and our sin problem as believers

-Thru the prism of God's Word we find that Redemption is a four-part process that we personally realize after we have believed.

We now understand these four steps:

Step 1-He purchased us in the market place of Humanity while in slavery to sin, the world and Satan

Step 2-He took us out of Market Place of General Humanity to be free from the 'slavers' we were under

Step 3-He positions us out-side of the world's market place with the purpose of being free from slavery to our sin nature and to our sins as believers, in order that we might be Holy Vessels for His use!

Step 4-And the final step of redemption is: we are to be delivered from this body of death and given a new sin free body

-our sin nature must be separated from us and a new body is given us before our redemption is complete.

As we moved from the School of Redemption we were truly overwhelmed by school number six

#6 The School of Abundance, Ephesians 1:8

-we read in **v. 8. He made *the riches of His grace*, at the end of v.7, to abound toward us in or within all wisdom and prudence,**

-He wants the riches of grace to abound toward us, to come pouring out on us!

-But He wants the riches of His grace abound toward us **'in'** all wisdom and prudence...

-We discovered that without wisdom and prudence we will not know how to understand and apply these riches to our lives!

-Our Summary Definitions of Wisdom and Prudence were:

Wisdom here is the divine revelation of Heavenly things,

-some of which are mysteries, starting, centering and finishing on Christ Crucified

-some of which are the Riches of Grace that abundantly flow to us on account of His finished work on the cross.

Prudence or insight or understanding comes only from the Holy Spirit and gives us the correct understanding of spiritual things, including the Mysteries of the next School.....

This brings us today to our seventh school....

#7 The School of Mysteries, Ephesians 1:9

-We read in... **v.9.... having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself**

-It is His good pleasure to make known that which was a mystery or previously unrevealed truth, but now has been revealed to us.

-He goes on in v.10 to tell us what that once veiled 'mystery' is:

10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

Dr. Arnold says this of the Mystery of v.10 that is now revealed: in Ephesians 1:9–10, the mystery of His will is to unite all things in the Messiah, for in the fullness of time, the present chaos will end as the world is brought to its full relationship to the Messiah, and all things are to be brought under the headship of the Messiah;

Here is how we will define Mystery:

In New Testament It refers to something that was totally unrevealed in the Old Testament, and only revealed in the New Testament. For something to qualify as a New Testament **mystery**, it must be something totally unrevealed anywhere in the Old Testament.

-A mystery, then, is something only knowable and understood as it has been revealed in the New Testament.

-There are by some counts Eight new revealed mysteries in the New Testament, plus a grouping of Satanic mysteries which make nine general mysteries

-the Eight and the one grouping of Satanic mysteries, we went into when we taught this school,

-refer to our website.

-The Only Mystery spoken of in the Gospels is revealed by Jesus and we devoted a separate Big Twelve

Message to that school

-We unveiled this Mystery in great detail in June of 2016

The Mystery of the Kingdom-Matthew 13, which discusses the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven on earth.

-We described the earthly kingdom as Christendom and within Christendom is the true church, is Christianity

-The parables of Matthew 13 describe the kingdom's conditions on earth while the King is absent from the earth and is in Heaven.

-The seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3 are representative of 'Christendom' on earth as well...

-And Jesus gives a report card of how those Seven earthly churches are doing in Rev. 2 & 3

-**Christendom** includes those who attend a local Christendom church whether they are saved or not:
Tares, false wheat are amongst the real wheat!

-Leaven or sin is present in Christendom, false teachers and false doctrines are present

-The Mystery includes the fact that the true Church is allowed to exist amidst evil, within and without

Dave is going over these parables of the Kingdom on Wednesday nights

This brings us to our eighth School...

#8 The School of The Gathering, Ephesians 1:10

-we need to link in with verse 9 so we read in **Eph. 1:9 and 10**

9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

It is His will to make known to us....10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

Dr. Arnold understands this Mystery in this way:

In Ephesians 1:9–10, Paul states that the mystery of God's will is to unite all things in the Messiah, for in the fullness of times, the present chaos will end as the world is brought to its full relationship to the Messiah, and all things are to be brought under the headship of the Messiah.

-In other words all things that are in Him that are scattered are to be literally gathered in Him.

-When? In the dispensation that ends all dispensations.

-Where will the things in Him come from? Heaven and Earth

-What will the gathering look like? Not sure but the many pieces and parts that are scattered will be a singularly united, in absolute oneness as 'one'!

Let's Break Down V.10

Starting in v. 9 we read again having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, What was this revealed mystery?

..... v.10 in that the dispensation (which one?) of the fullness of the times (pl.) (kairos, = seasons, ages, dispensations) He (The Father) might gather together in one all things in the Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

-Wuest's expanded translation: 9b which good thing He purposed in himself, 10 with respect to an administration of the completion of the epochs of time to bring back again to their original state all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him,

Questions we have about this verse:

First Question: What does the phrase 'fullness of the times' refer to?

- 'fullness of time' has this usage: **Galatians 4:4-5**

4 But when the fullness of the time (*kronos, watch and calendar time*) had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

- Here time is seen as linear within an age or dispensation; when at the end of that age or season God would send forth His son into the world.

- That particular Age or Dispensation is called the Dispensation of the Law.

- At the end of the Mosaic age, but within its boundaries God's Son came.

- His death and resurrection and Ascension ended that age or dispensation until the Age of Grace, the church age began at Pentecost.

- So we see that fullness of time does not have to mean the end of time itself.

- The word for 'times' here is kairos not the kronos, or chronological or the calendar time of Gal. 4:4.

- Kairos refers to 'seasons', periods of time, a phrase synonymous with 'epochs' 'ages', 'dispensations'

- For example: **Matthew 21:41** They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons (*our word kairos*)."

Luke 12:56 is also helpful. Jesus is speaking to those who should know the times they live in:

56 Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time (*kairos*)?

- More directly relating to our verse's context we read this in **Acts 1:6-7** 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time (*kronos, right now in time*) restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times (*kronos, better 'timings'*) or seasons (*kairos, season or age*) which the Father has put in His own authority.

- They were not to know the timing, the boundaries, the start and stop points of the seasons, *kairos*

- It was hidden from them, only the Father knows the starting points.

- What they did not know was the time or beginning of the season of the Kingdom's restoration on earth.

- But what Paul did know was that this restoration, what we call the Kingdom Age was to follow the 'fullness of the times' or ages or dispensations.

- Which leads into our second question....

Second Question: Is v.10 referencing the Kingdom Age or the threshold of the New Heavens and Earth after the Kingdom Age?

- I see no references to 'gatherings' of those 'In Christ', 'In Him', after the Kingdom Age ends.

- I do see a gathering for judgment in Rev. 20 of those not in Christ who will come before His Great White throne for eternal sentencing

- So the last gatherings of those in Him in Heaven and on Earth takes place is at the beginning of the K.A.

And the

Third Question: Does the answer as to which time period we are talking about lie in understanding what '**gather together in one all things in Christ**' means?

- The Greek word for 'gather' is used twice in the NT

- Here and **Romans 13:9**, where it is translated, '**summed**'. Here is the verse:

9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all **summed** up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- Notice five do 'nots' plus others are summed up not as five do nots, but as you shall love your neighbor

- Now that is creative 'summing' or creative math!
- There is a metamorphosis happening here in this summing up, this gathering of 'do not's'.
- The negatives, the nots become one great do: 'To love'. If you love you will avoid the do nots.
- When we look at this list of commandments what does not come to mind based on their individual meanings is the summation given here: **You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**
- Without faith, without Christ, without the Word of God and His Holy Spirit we do not come up with this kind of math: **You shall love your neighbor as yourself!**
- The natural man sums Romans 13:9 this way: 'And in summary we have five do not's!'
- This verse in Romans best pictures what this word for 'gather' means in our Ephesians passage.
- This gathering signifies a 'summing up' of many parts and components all perhaps seemingly unrelated
- A summing up of what happened to us on earth which might be considered a bunch of *I would rather not have gone thru this or that in my earthly life ...*
- The gathering, the summing up in Him will turn all of the 'nots' into 'love' and praise and glory to Him who will sum it all up for us!
- That's Heaven's math for our earthly experience
- Yet when we get there and we read the sum and look at the list of 'not so good experiences' we will be struck by how much sense this summation this gathering will make.
- The sum makes sense of the years of our life in Christ.
- Your Faith right now waits for that great summation that is yet to come!
- He will gather He will sum up all things in Him.

The Gatherings that are Spoken of

- in **Matthew 3:12** John B. prophesizes of the Lord's gatherings: Wheat into His barn, separated chaff to be burned
- This not the same word for gathering as in Eph. 1:10 or Rom. 13:9.
- This speaks of the process of gathering together, not the summation of the gathering
- Separating the righteous from the unrighteous
- When will He do this? Matthew 13:40 says at the end of the Age.
- Which Age? The current one, the Age of Grace.
- Mark 13:26-27** is the most parallel to Paul's statement about gathering in Eph. 1:10:
 Mark 13:26-27
 24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;
 25 the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
 26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.
- What happens next?
 27 **And then** (at the end of the tribulation, when he sets foot on earth) **He will send His angels, and gather** (signifies bringing together, not a summation) **together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.**

So we see that this gathering is after the tribulation which is the end of the current Age, the Dispensation of Grace

Fourth Question: Since positionally we are seated in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus according to Eph. 2:6 How is it that He will have to gather together all things that are in Him whether in Heaven or on earth?

- This mystery gathering of Eph. 1:10 is the completion of **Hebrews 2:8**

which reads: **You have put all things in subjection under his feet."**

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him.

-There are no sub-sovereignities in this world that He does not control even with all of the free will that is exercised on earth, He will bring to completion His plans for you and this earth.

v.8 cont. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

-Think of the parallel to being in Christ

-We are seated in Heavenly places in Christ, but 'The Gathering' will be a physical reality as well, a complete reality

-But when we are gathered together in Him as one, we will be complete.

-We will see all things put under him!

What will happen?

-The Gentile nations will be enriched under the authority of the Prince of Peace;

-Israel's great covenants will be fulfilled;

-the Church will have been joined to the Lord and have experienced the fruit of all her promised heavenly blessings.

-The stewardship of the Son will gather under one authority all things that are in heaven and on earth. -

The revelation of this mystery transcends human understanding, but the hope and its certainty is assured.

The Summing up of all things in Him into a complete singular 'one' unit in this Dispensation

Means

(1) The time of oppression and misrule ends by Christ taking His kingdom (Is. 11:3, 4).

(2) The time of witnessing and divine forbearance ends in judgment both for rewards and for eternal sentencing (Mt. 25:31-46; Acts 17:30, 31; Rev. 20:7-15).

(3) The time of the creation curse of toil ends in rest and reward (2Thes. 1:6, 7).

(4) The time of suffering ends in glory (Rom. 8:17, 18).

(5) The time of Israel's blindness and chastisement ends in restoration and conversion (Rom. 11:25-27; Ezek. 39:25-29).

(6) The times of the Gentiles end in the smiting of Nebuchadnezzar image and the setting up of the kingdom of the heavens (Dan. 2:34, 35; Rev. 19:15-21).

(7) The time of created man's rule of the earth ends in deliverance at the manifestation of the sons of God (Gen. 3:17; Isa. 11:6-8; Rom. 8:19-21).

Personally Speaking

#1- The Sums of Your Life in Christ Will not fully come in this life

-though we now see thru the glass dimly, but then at the gathering: face to face and the math will be perfect.

#2- In **Acts 8:1** it says this:

8:1 Now Saul was consenting to his death.

At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered (sowing of seeds) throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

-The opposite of the English word 'gather' is to 'scatter'.

-In this dispensation God allows and uses persecutions to scatter His people as seeds to be planted in new places to bear fruit unto righteousness,

-to be used of God

-to be a light and witness

-But perhaps you see persecutions as bad math numbers.

-But in the gathering you will see that the sum of our trials and persecutions were for the furtherance of His work in you and hopefully thru you.

#3-You think the math of injustice in your life is not in your favor.

-But remember this: God would be unjust if He forgave you apart from the finished work of His Son on the Cross.

-Can't you take time to look at those who are unjust towards you and think of them thru the cross stained eyes of God's justice.

-Let them be unjust, perhaps His just and crucified son will save thru YOUR witness.

#4-The math of your earthly life's health does not add up here and now. Why you say?

-You understand that sin entered the world and death followed accompanied by its instruments of sickness and war.

-You understand it but how can He use me like this? Why me? Why chronic sickness?

Cecil

Janette

Doug

Cecil's Daughter

#5-Thru the Word of God and the Clarity of understanding we can begin to do the Summing up now.

-Instead adding up the 'Do Nots' of Romans 13:9 and in summation saying I have 5 Do Nots

-Instead you look thru cross stained eyes and begin to do Heavenly Math

-And the Summation will always be: Love and Praise and Honor and Glory to the Lamb!

-Paul did early summation math while on earth. He said this in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

The School of the Gathering

The School of the Summation of All Things!

Amen!

