

2 • God Has a Purpose for You

We learned in Part 1 of this study that the big word **providence** means “to see before.” Someone sees and knows everything, and that Someone perfectly, steadfastly cares about and **provides** for all of us. We may not think about God’s providence very often, but we depend on it every single day of our lives.



That same Father in heaven has a **purpose** that we need to carefully think about together. Let’s use **Ephesians 1:3-12** to get started. Listen carefully for the action words. There are **a lot** of them. In fact, there are so many that you may have trouble keeping up and filling in all of the blanks. That’s okay. It would be good exercise to go back, even after class, and fill in all of these action words. More than anything, just **notice how MUCH** God has done to **provide** with great **PURPOSE** for our greatest needs!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has _____ us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he _____ us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he _____ us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the _____ of his _____, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has _____ us in the Beloved. In him we have _____ through his blood, the _____ of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he _____ upon us, in all wisdom and insight _____ to us the mystery of his will, according to his _____, which he _____ in Christ as a _____ for the fullness of time, to _____ all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the _____ of him who _____ all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

Look at all those action words! Paul continues to use the same sort of words in **Ephesians 3:8-12**: **plan** (3:9), **created** (3:9), **made known** (3:10), **purpose** (3:11), and **realized** (3:11). Slow down and notice just **how MUCH** God has already done!

The apostle Paul writes the same way throughout **Romans 8**: **revealed** (8:18), **set free** (8:21), **adoption** (8:23), **redemption** (8:23), **intercedes** (8:26), **searches** (8:27), **will** (8:27), **called** (8:28), **purpose** (8:28), **foreknew** (8:29), **predestined** (8:29), **called** (8:30), **justified** (8:30), **glorified** (8:30). So many action words! All about God and what he has done. For us.

Why? Why has he done so much? Because he “saw before.” He saw ... *what*? **Let’s talk about it...**

For Class & Family Discussion:

- ▶ When you think of **PURPOSE**, what comes to your mind? What is purpose? If someone has a purpose...
- ▶ We learned last week that God is the great Provider. But why is it extremely important for us to realize: he not only **provides** for us; he also has a **purpose** for us? Why can't we just let him provide for us and ignore his purpose for us?
- ▶ In **Ephesians 1:3**, Paul describes the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "who has blessed us in Christ..." What does it mean to be "blessed" by someone?
- ▶ We highlighted several action words in **Ephesians 3:4-6**: chose, predestined, purpose, will, and blessed. God has been busy! God wants something. He wants to "bless" us in a very specific way. So ... what does he want? Let's go back and read **Ephesians 1:7-10** slowly and carefully together. What do you see? What does God want for each one of us?
- ▶ In **Ephesians 3:9** we heard that the God who created all things had a "plan" that was "brought to light for everyone" through the work of people like the apostle Paul. What was that plan? In what way was it a "mystery hidden" for a very long time? Is it still hidden?
- ▶ In **Ephesians 3:11**, the major character of God's "eternal purpose" is named. Who is it? According to **3:12**, what difference can he make in our lives?
- ▶ We all have very real needs. We learn from a young age that some of our greatest needs are food, water, clothing, and shelter. But what we're learning from these passages is that we have even greater needs than those. Needs like...
- ▶ You've probably heard **Romans 8:28** quoted before. What does it mean, in light of tonight's study? What do we need to see, recognize, and thank our Father in heaven—the God who "sees before" — for?