

Solo Christo, Part 3: The Supremacy of Christ Alone and the Sufficiency of His Grace
Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on November 28, 2010
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Eph. 1:3-10 (NKJV) 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**, ⁴just as He chose us **in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before **Him** in love, ⁵having predestined us to adoption as sons **by Jesus Christ to Himself**, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted **in the Beloved**. ⁷**In Him** we have redemption **through His blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of **His grace** ⁸which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰that 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**.*

In our verse-by-verse study through this great book and great text, our focus today will be verses 8-10, which culminate with the great purpose statement of the universe for God's glory, in the fullness of the times: *to gather together in one all things in Christ*. That is the summary statement, a summing up of all things in Christ, or as one translation puts it: *to head up all things in Christ*. Another has *to bring all things in heaven and earth under one head* (NIV). ESV: *to unite all things in him*. This is the universe's unifying plan to unite or bring together in unity under Christ, heaven and earth, redeemed humanity, righteous angels, restored creation, renewed heavens and earth, finally unified to fully glorify Him (v. 12b, 14b)

And in Paul's argument, that process begins with the first coming of Christ, as Galatians 4 says it was *in the fullness of time* that God sent His Son to redeem us so that we might receive adoption as sons. Eph. 1:10 begins with the Jew/Gentile church becoming one in unity, brothers in Christ, and that plan will be culminated at the end of time, when all God's redeemed adopted children from every culture and color, tribe and tongue, will be under Christ as family, as brothers, as one in Christ. The church is to begin that in this life.

Eph. 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹*Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called **Uncircumcision** by what is called the **Circumcision** [by the Jews – this was a barrier to NT church unity] ¹²that at that time you were **without Christ**, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now **in Christ Jesus** you who once were far off [i.e., in other countries, other ethnicities] have been brought near **by the blood of Christ**. ¹⁴For **He Himself** is our peace, **who has made both one**, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances [incl. circumcision], so as **to create in Himself one new man from the two**, thus making peace, ¹⁶and that He might reconcile them both to God **in one body** through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸For **through Him** we both have access by one Spirit **to the Father**. ¹⁹Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and **members of the household of God ...***

“So, are they brothers?” the woman asked. My wife ... and I, jet-lagged from just returning from Russia, looked at each other wearily. This was the 12th time since we returned that we’d been asked this question. When I looked back at the woman’s face, she had her eyebrows raised. “Are they?” she repeated. “Are they brothers?”

This lady was looking at some pictures, printed off a computer, of two one-year-old boys in a Russian orphanage, boys who had only days earlier been pronounced by a Russian court to be our children ... Maria and I had returned to Kentucky to wait for the call to return to pick up our children, and had only these pictures ... our equivalent of a prenatal sonogram, to show to our friends and relatives back home. But people kept asking: “Are they brothers?”

“They are now,” I replied. “Yes,” the woman said. “I know. But are they *really* brothers?” Clenching my jaw, and repeating Beatitudes to myself silently in my mind, I coolly responded, “Yes, now they are both our children so they are now *really* brothers.” The woman sighed, rolled her eyes, and said, “Well, you know what I mean.”

Of course, we did know what she meant. What she wondered was whether these two boys, born three weeks apart, share a common biological ancestry, a common bloodline, some common DNA. It struck me that this question betrayed what most of us tend to view as really important when it comes to sonship: traceable genetic material.

This is the reason people would also ask us, “Now do you also have any children of your own?” [opposite of “children of your own is children “not your own”? Or “real parents” vs. “fake parents”?]

And it is the reason newspaper obituaries will often refer to the deceased’s “adopted child,” as though this were the equivalent of a stepchild or a protégé, rather than a real offspring ...

All of us are looking to discover who we *really* are, whether we were born into loving homes or abandoned at orphanage doors, whether we were born into stable families or born ... in a stable.

I guess that’s what bothered me so much about the “are they brothers?” question. There was almost a note of implied pity – as though, if they were *biologically* brothers, well, then at least they’d have each other. The query seemed to be asking, “Is this a real family or just a legal fiction?” The question seemed to render them orphans again. That question isn’t new ... As I read through the Books of Ephesians and Galatians and Romans, it occurred to me that this is precisely the question that was faced by the Apostle Paul ...

As pig-flesh-eating Gentile believers—formerly goddess-worshippers and Caesar-magnifiers and all the rest—began confessing Jesus as Messiah, some Jewish Christians demanded to know, “Are they circumcised?” This meant, of course, “Are they *really* part of us? Are they our brothers?” The Gentile believers would respond, “Yes, with the circumcision made without hands, the circumcision of Christ.” [compare Eph 2:11 & Col. 2:11] From the heated letters of the New Testament, it is evident that the response was along the lines of, “Yes, but are you *really* [one of us], and you know what I mean.”

This was no peripheral issue. For the Apostle Paul, the unity of the Church as a household had everything to do with the gospel itself. And where the tribal fracturing of the Church was most threatening, Paul laid out a key insight into the Church’s union with Christ, the spirit of adoption ... [If] we see our “brotherhood” only in our DNA ... we don’t understand the *household* into which we’ve come ...

[Eph. 2:19 says] We are now all “fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” ... We are now brothers [look at Eph. 6:23, *real* brothers, *beloved* brethren like 6:21b. But the world, the flesh, and the devil tempts us to think otherwise] ... Are you really a son of the living God? Does your God really know you [as your heavenly Father]? ... Are these really your brothers and sisters? Do you really belong here? ...

Our adoption is about more than just belonging. Our adoption is about the day when the graves of this planet will be emptied, when the great assembly of Christ's Church will be gathered before the Judgment Seat. On that day, the accusing principalities and powers will probably look once more at us [and Satan who is called the accuser of the brethren may once again question our brethren status, accusing we're not *really brothers*, but if we have as our Advocate the Emperor of the Universe as our Elder Brother by adoption, Jesus can thunder in reply] "They are now."¹

Author and theologian Justin Taylor (who has also adopted) says:

'we must put on our gospel-centered glasses and ask ourselves: Am I *really* a child of God or not? Is God *really* my Father or not? ... For those who [really have trusted Jesus as Lord] the answer is unambiguously Yes! Remember, we have no biological connection to Jesus. We began our lives in a different household, slaves of a different master. But we have been adopted, and our new legal relationship is true, real, and glorious ... praise God — our *Father* — for the incredible gift of his Eternal Son and the privilege of being a part of their family.'²

I came up with an acronym for G-R-A-C-E for the flow of 1:3-14:

God's Redeemed Adopted Child Eternally

That's the essence of Paul's celebration of praise in chapter 1. It's important to see how today's text, v. 8-10 fits in the context and flow of what Paul is building towards. Paul says in 1:9 that God made known to us a mystery, but what he just mentions in passing in chapter 1 he comes back to in chapter 3 leading to chapter 4.

3:1 (NKJV) *For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—²if indeed you have heard of the **dispensation of the grace**, of God which was given to me for you, ³how that by revelation **He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already** [when did he write before briefly of a mystery made known? 1:9 used same phrase "made known / mystery"], ⁴by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) ⁵which **in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets** ⁶that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel ...*

4:1 I, therefore [in other words in light of all I've been saying in chapters 1-3 about Jew and Gentile, adoption, family, unity, etc., Paul says in v. 3 they must] ... *keep the **unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* ⁴*There is **one** body and **one** Spirit, just as you were called in **one** hope of your calling; **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism; ⁶**one** God and Father of **all**, who is above **all**, and through **all**, and in **you all** ... ¹³till we **all** come to the **unity** of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God ...*

So when Paul speaks in 1:10 of God's ultimate plan and purpose for the universe to "**gather together in one all things in Christ**" --that's where he's going. All under Christ, all one in Christ, all to be united and unified in one body of Christ, all real brothers because of Christ, and all that Paul has to say and celebrate is all of Christ.

Ephesians 1:3-14 is one big sentence, and in its center (v. 7-10) is the centrality of Christ alone and His work. The sufficiency of Christ's grace (v. 7-9, giving us all we need for salvation and life) and the supremacy of Christ over all things (v.10) are the big ideas.

- Col. 1:18 says Christ "*is the head of the body ... that in all things He may have the preeminence*" (NKJV, or in NIV "supremacy").

- 2 Cor. 9:8 (ESV) *And God is able to make **all grace** abound to you, so that having **all sufficiency in all things at all times** ...*

That's all-sufficient grace for all things at all times of our life! And Paul is also building towards the supremacy of Christ over all.

In the context and flow, Paul shifts from God the Father to Christ His Son (v. 6b) and start of v. 7 "*in the Beloved. In Him ...*" Also there's a shift from the past to present. In v. 3-6, it's past tense:

- v. 3b "*who **has blessed us***"
- v. 4 "*He **chose us in Him before the creation of the world***"
- v. 5 "*He **predestined us to adoption***"
- But notice the change in v. 7: *In Him **we have redemption***
- Paul has moved from the work of the Father to the Son, from heaven to earth, from the past to the present, from what God planned before creation to its practical out-working in us His new creation, all in/through/to/for Christ

In Eph. 1 Christ alone is the source and sphere of spiritual blessing (v. 3). We've been purchased and paid for, bought back, ransomed by Christ alone (v. 7, *solo christo*) not to be a *solo Christian*, but to be a part of a family. That phrase from the Reformers, *solo christo*, was used to emphasize that *salvation is a solo operation*, not *Christ with me as his sidekick*. Christ is the sole Savior, the only Savior. Christ alone saves souls, not some cooperation or collaboration or combination of what Christ does *plus what I do* that saves me. If you think He needs your help, you don't grasp the gospel or grace.

Salvation is not a team effort. There's no "I" in grace. It's not what "we" do (I and Christ together *we* can pull this off). The pronoun is not "we" or "me" (it was *me*; I did _____, so I'm saved). The pronoun a mature Christian should use to describe his or her salvation at its source is not "we" or "me" – but only "He" – Christ alone. He did it all, He saved me all the way, He paid it all, all to Him I owe for the supremacy of Christ in salvation, and the sufficiency of His sovereign grace: (v. 4, our being chosen is *in Christ*), son-adopting grace (v. 5 says that is *through Christ*), slave-redeeming grace or slave-ransoming or slave-liberating grace (v.7, *redemption through Christ's blood*), sin-forgiving grace (v.7, also *through Christ*), and superabundant sufficient grace (v. 8-9), grace to God's **Redeemed Adopted Child Eternally**.

How did He redeem and adopt and bring me home as His child?

In my place condemned he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood, Hallelujah ... When He comes our glorious
King, **All His ransomed home to bring**
Then anew this song we'll sing, Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Philip Bliss wrote those words in 1875, a promising hymn-writer then just a couple years older than I am, who had already written a number of hymns still sung today: Dare to be a Daniel, Jesus Loves Even Me, Wonderful Words of Life, etc. One of his hymns really summarizes what we studied last week well, but he never got to sing it or publish it. “Hallelujah, What a Savior” was one of the last songs he ministered publically, but he was working on another when traveling after Christmas 1876 on a train, a bridge collapsed plunging many to their death. Philip reportedly survived the initial impact, but died going back to the flames to try to rescue his wife. Both died, but in going through the wreckage, they found some of his belongings, including a piece of paper with the lyrics of a new song he was working on, celebrating the theology of v. 7:

I will sing of my Redeemer, And His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross He suffered, From the curse **to set me free.**
I will tell the wondrous story, How my lost estate to save,
In His boundless love and mercy, He **the ransom freely gave.**
I will praise my dear Redeemer, His **triumphant power** I'll tell,
How the victory He giveth **Over sin, and death, and hell.**
I will sing of my Redeemer, And His heav'nly love to me;
He from death to life hath brought me, **Son of God with Him to be.**
Refrain: Sing, oh sing, of my Redeemer, With His blood, He purchased me.
*On the cross, He sealed my pardon, Paid the debt, and made me free.*³

I don't know of any better words to summarize and celebrate what we studied last week, and because this whole section of Ephesians is praise (v. 3) I've been bringing in praise that others have written: “He from death to life hath brought me, **Son of God with Him to be.**”

Ephesians 2:5 “*even when we were dead in our transgressions, [God] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...⁷ so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*”

Similar language to Ephesians 1:8 “*riches of His grace in Christ*” – here it's “*surpassing riches of His grace*” displayed for the ages to come. God's plan in saving us goes beyond us, it is to glorify and magnify Christ, the surpassing riches of His grace, superabundant grace which is more than enough for our needs, sufficient grace in Christ alone, not just for salvation but for all of our spiritual life.

Jay Adams, explains the flow of Ephesians 1:8-10: “There is a rich store of grace possessed by the Father, which He gives to His own ... There is grace for times of trouble, there is grace to overcome one's anger, there is grace to put lust and adulterous life-styles away for good. Indeed, there is more than enough grace for every need the believer may have. When a [Christian] complains, “I don't know if I can find it *in me* to go on” tell him that is not the problem. We know that there is not strength and wisdom *in him*; the question is whether there is help to go on from an outside source [and how to appropriate it]. And here is Paul's answer – there is plenty of help available from the storehouse where God has amassed riches of grace. And, they are as available to [any Christian] in Christ as they are to Christ Himself. What then is his complaint? Turn to the proper source ... If the problem persists, somehow he is failing to avail himself of all that God has provided. Probe what he is doing to find out how. As a child of God, the Father's wealth of grace is available. And notice, this isn't something for which [God's children] must beg. These blessings have been provided already in Christ Jesus.

But there is more. These spiritual blessings include **all sorts of wisdom and understanding** (v. 8). Precisely what most [struggling Christians] need: understanding of God's will, understanding of the situation. Wisdom to know what to do in delicate circumstances, wisdom to make decisions and plans. In Christ, from before time began, God determined to give these things to his adopted sons. How, then, can believers claim they do not have the wisdom and understanding in any given situation to do the right thing? They have both – in God's Word – if they will only read and use what God prescribes ... [as you study, James 1 says ask God, He gives wisdom lavishly, generously, like v. 8, but don't just be prayerful and passive, be careful to read, study, apply] The Christian ... has God as His Father, and, in Christ, all the riches of wisdom and understanding He wishes to impart. What a shame it is, then, to see Christians defeated, perplexed, failing to use the spiritual blessings with which they've been endowed! ... Think of it! You are a son of God and a fellow-heir with Jesus Christ. You are involved in this glorious plan of God that is bringing about the exaltation of His Son. He graciously disclosed this plan to you, so that you would know all that He has done for you and all He has made available to you. That is another blessing – that God would confide in you what He is doing (vv. 9, 10). Life is not without meaning!⁴

It's probably best to understand the wisdom and insight in v. 8b as part of the riches of grace from God lavished on us, leading to v. 9. In other words, God gives to His children generously, abundantly, lavishly wisdom and insight/understanding/prudence in v. 8b. The 2nd term from root word *phroneo*, means "To think, have a mindset ... this word involves the will, affections, and conscience."⁵ Brian Borgman in his sermon on this text emphasized that saving grace and becoming a Christian should not be understood only in terms of what God has done for us, but what God has done *to us*. Saving grace is changing grace, giving a new heart, new affections.

In the KJV, the root of the Grk word at the end of v. 8 in Col. 3:2 is "*Set your **affection** on things above, not on things on the earth.*" In Matthew 16:23, Jesus "*turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou **savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.***" (KJV)

Martyn Lloyd-Jones defines the word at the end of v. 8 as 'a state of mind which includes the affections as well as the understanding ... to discern the excellence of the things of God, and to have a corresponding affection toward them ... It includes my affections, my interest, my love; my whole being is called out to it; and I desire it with my whole being.'⁶

John Piper in his book *Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ*, explains:

When I speak of *seeing* Jesus Christ, I don't mean seeing with the eyes of your head, but the eyes of your heart [like Eph. 1:18]... When we see with our spiritual eyes, we see the truth and beauty and value of Jesus Christ for what they really are ... *Savoring* Jesus Christ is the response to this second kind of seeing.

When you see something as true and beautiful and valuable, you savor it. That is, you treasure it. You cherish and admire and prize it. Spiritual seeing and spiritual savoring are so closely connected that it would be fair to say: If you don't savor Christ, you haven't seen Christ for who he is. If you don't prize him above all things, you haven't apprehended his true worth.⁷

Let me say to you before we go any further, if you've never seen Christ for who He truly is, if you've never savored Christ, then come to the Savior and Lord today in repentant faith to Christ alone, knowing His grace alone is sufficient to save your soul, His heart-changing grace, affection-producing grace. May the eyes of your heart be opened today (v. 18). Pray for God to give you eyes to see and affections to savor and treasure and cherish and admire and prize Christ as infinite beauty, value, and worth. If you've never known Him as Savior and Lord who you love and want to live for, may you see and savor Him today and submit to Christ in His sovereignty and supremacy over your life as Lord and Savior. Turn from your sins to Christ and trust Him, treasure Him, for your everlasting joy, or you will experience everlasting misery in hell. There is a cost to discipleship, but the alternative is horrific, and the gain of following Christ is priceless, G.R.A.C.E. (God's Redeemed Adopted Child Eternally). Saving grace not only gives new affections, it gives a new family.

Russ Moore, on 1st century converts often losing biological family:

Many of them would have been told by their parents, their siblings, their spouses, and their villages not to speak to them again until they pulled themselves out of this fisherman's cult. The Spirit of adoption didn't just wrench them away from their family ties. *He gave them new ones.* The Messiah they followed told them that those who leave behind "houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, *will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life*" (Matt. 19:29). Through adoption into Christ, the word *brother* really means something ... What would it mean, though, if we took the radical notion of being brothers and sisters seriously? ... if our churches themselves saw our brotherhood and sisterhood in the church itself rather than in our fleshly identities.⁸

In Eph. 1:9, grace also has *made known to us the mystery of His will* (3:6 explains the mystery = uncircumcised Gentiles as fellow heirs in the same body) *according to His good pleasure* ... It was God's pleasure to adopt us (same phrase in v. 5) and it also *pleased* God to make known or reveal His plan to His children (9). The world's wise men don't understand, but God is pleased to let us. One of the few times we read of Jesus rejoicing on earth is this:

Lk 10:21 (NIV) *At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise [of this age, adj. of Eph. 1:8] and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for **this was your good pleasure.**"*²² *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and **no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.**"*

Did you catch that in Luke 10:22? No one knows God the Father except the Son *and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.* You don't know the Father (intimate relational knowing) unless His Son has chosen to reveal the Father to you, Jesus says.

That's a whole other level to "*no one gets to the Father but through Me.*" That's a whole other level to salvation being through Christ *alone.* That's a whole other level to the line of Amazing Grace: "was blind but now I see ..." Why do I see? Not because I performed a miracle on myself so my blindness could be removed so I could see; I was lost but now am found by Christ, He made me to see!

Remember what Jesus said in John 8? *Everyone who sins is a slave to sin ... If the Son makes you free, then you will be free indeed* (v. 34, 36). We talk about free will / free speech but before Christ frees us, we're slaves to sin. Jesus said unless He sets us free we're not free indeed, but slaves to sin and its nature. A slave or blind man can make choices and can sin freely within the place or parameters where he lives, but *he can't change his nature or make himself free or make himself see*. Jesus said in John 3:3 unless you're born from above, you can't see the kingdom of God. We need a new birth/nature to see it, and Christ alone can do that.

Paul in 2 Cor. 3:14 says there's a veil over our faces and "**only in Christ is it taken away.**" In 2 Cor. 4:4 Paul adds that to make matters worse, Satan "*has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ ... [so how are we saved? v. 6] For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.* [in other words to see and savor Christ as glorious and desirable] ⁷ *But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.* (NIV)

That's the sufficiency of Christ's grace. Christ alone has sufficient power to save us, not only sufficient, but an all-surpassing power. Don't give the glory to us *clay pots* for being able to see Christ as glorious and as a treasure, give glory to Christ alone! To God be the glory, great things He has done! He illumined the darkness of our world the same way He did the first world in Genesis 1, by a miracle! God can say "Let there be light" and it is so. The same sovereign almighty power that created the earth and light and life is also on display in and through us clay earthen vessels so the all-surpassing power is so obviously from God and not from us! And it doesn't just illumine us or make known the Father in conversion, Christ keeps making known and revealing and illumining us, not just sufficient grace to save, Christ reveals *all* the Father tells Him.

Look at John 15:15. The same word "made known" in Eph. 1:9 is used of Christ making known: *No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.* ¹⁶ *"You did not choose Me but I chose you ...*

According to TDNT, that word "chose" was common in the Greek papyri and inscriptions for when a master chose a slave. The slave didn't choose his Lord. The Lord Jesus chose us but doesn't call us "slaves" or treat us as slaves who are kept in the dark about their master's doings and plans. We call Jesus Lord and Master and we obey Him as His bond-slaves, but He amazingly *calls us "friends" and makes known to us what the Father is doing*, and if you look at John 17:26 what Jesus makes known to us is even more amazing!

17:26 *I have made Your name known* [same word "made known" as Eph. 1:9] *to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.*"

The highest love of the universe, the love God the Father for all eternity has loved God the Son with, Christ says He has *made known* the name of His Father (i.e., His nature and all that He is) so that very same love may be *in us*, and Christ may be *in us* as well!!

The purpose of Christ making known these things has a purpose and it's the same purpose Paul is building towards in Ephesians, God is glorified, Christ is magnified, when His church is unified:

²¹ ***that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us so that the world may believe that You sent Me.*** ²² *“The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, ***that they may be one, just as We are one;**** ²³ ***I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.***

That's why Christ “makes known” God's plan in v. 26 and I believe in Eph. 1:9-10 as well, for His glory and to exalt the supremacy of Christ by how His church loves each other as a family by grace, God's Redeemed Adopted Children Eternally.

And in John 20:17 after the cross Jesus calls them a new metaphor to highlight this unity. His first words as resurrected Lord are “Go tell ***My brothers...***” (not slaves, friends, *My brothers*)!

So what Paul is talking about in Ephesians of God making known His will is much bigger than us and our salvation, it's for the world to see. As he'll say in Eph. 3 it's for the whole universe to see, the supremacy of Christ manifested by our unity in Christ as family of Christ, all things united in Him, gathered together as one under the head Brother, God as our real Father. We're in a real family now and can have real unity in the church as *real brothers and sisters*.

It's all because Jesus became *really one of us*, biologically and legally, though adopted by Joseph he was *really a human son*, of real flesh-and-blood with us. Hebrews 2 says “***He had to be made like his brothers in every respect ... Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery ... For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory ... he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers”*** (v. 17, 14-15, 10-13)

And yes, if Jesus is our Lord, we're *really* brothers.

¹ Russell Moore, *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches* (Crossway, 2009), chapter 2. Also published as “The Brotherhood of Sons – What Some Rude Questions About Adoption Taught Me About the Gospel of Christ,” *Touchstone*, May 2007.

² Justin Taylor, “From Adopted to Adopting,” *Boundless*, November 8, 2007.

³ K. W. Osbeck, *Amazing Grace: 366 inspiring hymn stories for daily devotions* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1992), p. 347.

⁴ Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Commentary: Galatians-Philemon*, p. 71-72

⁵ Spiros Zodhiates, *The complete word study dictionary : New Testament* (G5426). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

⁶ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *God's Ultimate Purpose*, p. 193.

⁷ John Piper, *Seeing and savoring Jesus Christ* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2004), p. 9.

⁸ Moore, *Ibid.*