

Chosen in Christ for Holiness

The Verse Behind Ephesians 1:4

Main Verse

Ephesians 1:4 says:

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

When people hear the word "**chosen**," the conversation can quickly turn into an argument.

Who was chosen? When were they chosen? How were they chosen? Did God choose particular individuals, or did He choose a people in Christ? And before long, everyone is reaching for their theological boxing gloves.

But while those questions matter, they can cause us to miss something Paul states very plainly.

God's purpose in choosing us isn't merely to rescue us from punishment. He chose us in Christ: "**That we should be holy and without blame before him in love.**"

God doesn't simply want forgiven rebels who continue living exactly as they did before. He wants sons and daughters who reflect His character. He doesn't merely remove guilt. He creates a holy people. He doesn't only save us from something. He saves us **for** something.

So in this study, we're going to look at the verse behind Ephesians 1:4 and see why being chosen in Christ is inseparably connected with becoming holy and without blame before God.

By the way, there is a link in the description box below where you can download the entire transcript of this in video in PDF ebook format absolutely free and no I don't even ask for your email address, just go to the link below and download it with no hoops to jump through.

The Verse Begins With "According As"

Ephesians 1:4 begins: "**According as he hath chosen us in him.**"

The words "**according as**" connect verse 4 directly with verse 3.

Ephesians 1:3 says:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Then verse 4 continues: "**According as he hath chosen us in him.**"

In other words, being chosen in Christ is one of the **spiritual blessings** Paul has just mentioned. Paul isn't beginning an unrelated theological discussion. He's explaining what God has done for believers in Christ.

God has blessed us

in Christ

God has chosen us

in Christ

God has adopted us

through Christ

God has accepted us

in Christ

God has redeemed us

through Christ's blood

The whole passage revolves around Jesus. That means we can't understand election properly if we separate it from Christ.

Paul doesn't simply say: "**He hath chosen us.**" He says: "**He hath chosen us in him.**"

The choice is centred in Christ. The plan is accomplished through Christ. The people are chosen in union with Christ. The purpose is fulfilled by Christ living in His people. Christ isn't a footnote to God's choice. **Christ is the centre of it.**

What Does "Chosen" Mean?

The Greek word translated "chosen" is ***eklegomai***. It means to select, choose, or pick out. The word is used in Scripture for making a deliberate choice.

Jesus chose

the twelve apostles

Churches chose

representatives

God chose

Israel

God chose

David

And here, Paul says **God chose us in Christ**. This wasn't an accident. Salvation wasn't God scrambling to repair a plan that had gone wrong.

God's purpose in Christ existed: **"Before the foundation of the world."**

Before creation. Before Adam sinned. Before Abraham was called. Before Israel became a nation. Before the law was given. Before David sat upon the throne. Before Christ was born in Bethlehem.

God had already purposed that His people would be found in His Son.

The cross wasn't an emergency response. The church wasn't an afterthought. Holiness wasn't a late addition to the gospel. God's purpose from before the foundation of the world was to have a people in Christ who would be **holy and without blame** before Him.

Chosen "In Him"

The phrase **"in him"** controls the meaning of this verse. Paul doesn't present election as something separate from Jesus.

God's chosen one is first and foremost Christ Himself. Isaiah 42:1 prophesied:

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth."

Jesus is God's chosen servant. He is the beloved Son. He is the promised Messiah. He is the one through whom God's purpose is fulfilled.

When we believe the gospel, we're joined to Christ. We become members of His body. We share in what belongs to Him.

His death
becomes our death to sin

His resurrection
becomes the source of our new life

His righteousness
becomes the basis of our standing

His inheritance
becomes our inheritance

His Father
becomes our Father

His Spirit
dwells in us

That's why every blessing in Ephesians 1 is said to be "in Christ," "in him," or "in whom." God hasn't placed salvation in human achievement. He has placed it in His Son.

First Corinthians 1:30 says:

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Our wisdom is in Christ. Our righteousness is in Christ. Our sanctification is in Christ. Our redemption is in Christ.

We haven't been chosen because God looked down through history and found a group of naturally holy people. That would have been a very short search. We're chosen in the Holy One so that His life and character may be formed in us.

Before the Foundation of the World

Paul says God chose us in Christ: "**Before the foundation of the world.**" This reveals the **eternal purpose of God**.

Salvation begins in God's heart, not ours. We didn't surprise God by believing. We didn't create the gospel. We didn't persuade God to become merciful. God purposed salvation before we existed.

Second Timothy 1:9 says that God:

"Hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace."

Then Paul says this grace: "**Was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.**"

God's purpose	God's grace
In Christ	Before the world began

Salvation is rooted in God's **eternal purpose**, not our temporary performance. That should produce humility. No believer can boast as though we designed salvation. No believer can stand before God and say, "You made an excellent choice when You found me." We were sinners. We needed mercy. God's saving purpose began in His grace.

But this eternal choice also gives us **security and direction**. Our Christian life isn't pointless. God hasn't rescued us without knowing what He intends to do with us. He chose us with a purpose.

What Were We Chosen For?

Here is where Paul makes God's purpose clear:

"That we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

The word "**that**" introduces the purpose or intended result.

So that we should be holy

So that we should be without blame

So that we should live before Him

So that this life would be formed and expressed in love

God's goal isn't simply that we should make a decision, repeat a prayer, and then continue unchanged. The gospel produces a people who belong to God. A people set apart for Him. A people whose lives increasingly reflect His holiness.

Grace doesn't lower God's purpose. Grace makes God's purpose possible.

What Does "Holy" Mean?

The Greek word translated "holy" is ***hagios***. It carries the idea of being set apart, consecrated, or belonging to God. Something holy is separated from ordinary use and devoted to God.

Under the Old Testament, the tabernacle was holy. The priesthood was holy. The altar was holy. The vessels were holy. The Sabbath was holy. Israel was called to be a holy nation.

These things were holy because they belonged especially to God and were devoted to His purpose.

So when Paul says believers should be holy, he isn't merely saying we should become slightly nicer people.

Holiness means we belong to God

- Our bodies belong to Him
- Our minds belong to Him
- Our relationships belong to Him
- Our speech belongs to Him
- Our time belongs to Him
- Our decisions belong to Him

We've been set apart from the dominion of sin and set apart for God.

First Peter 1:15 and 16 says:

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

"Conversation" in the King James Bible refers to conduct or manner of life. God's holiness becomes the pattern for our lives. We don't define holiness by comparing ourselves with other people. That's always dangerous because we can usually find someone who makes us look impressive. **We look to God. He is the standard.**

Holiness Is More Than Avoiding Certain Sins

Many of us grew up thinking holiness was mainly a list of things Christians shouldn't do. Don't drink this. Don't wear that. Don't go there. Don't watch that. Some of those warnings may have been wise, and some may have been cultural rules presented as though Moses personally delivered them from Mount Sinai.

But **biblical holiness is larger than avoiding a list of visible sins**. Holiness means being devoted to God. It includes what we avoid, but it also includes what we pursue.



We're called to pursue righteousness

Love. Mercy. Truth. Purity. Justice.



Faithfulness and forgiveness

Faithfulness. Forgiveness. Humility.
Compassion.

Holiness isn't merely emptying the house. It's filling the house with what belongs to God.

A person could avoid several obvious sins and still be proud, bitter, harsh, unforgiving, dishonest, or completely lacking in love. That isn't the holiness of Christ. **The holiness God desires reflects the full character of His Son.**

"Without Blame"

Paul says we should be: "**Holy and without blame.**"

The Greek word translated "without blame" is ***amomos***. It means without blemish, faultless, or unblemished. This word has **sacrificial language** behind it.

Under the law, animals offered to God had to be without blemish. Leviticus 22:21 says:

"It shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein."

The sacrifice couldn't be diseased, injured, or defective. It had to be without blemish. That language eventually points to Jesus Christ.

First Peter 1:18 and 19 says we were redeemed:

"With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Jesus is the truly spotless sacrifice. He was morally perfect. He was without sin. He offered Himself to God.

But here is something remarkable. The same language used of Christ's spotless sacrifice is now applied to God's purpose for His people. God intends to present us holy and without blemish before Him. **Christ, the spotless Lamb, is producing a spotless people.**

Our Position and Our Transformation

How can Paul say believers are without blame when we still make mistakes? We need to distinguish between our **position in Christ** and the **ongoing transformation** of our lives.

Our Position in Christ

In Christ, we're justified. Our sins are forgiven. Christ's righteousness is the basis of our acceptance.

Romans 8:1 says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

That is our standing.

Our Ongoing Transformation

But God is also transforming our conduct. Ephesians 5:25 through 27 says: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

Christ gave Himself for the church so that He might cleanse and sanctify it.

He accepts us by grace, and then He works within us. Grace doesn't say, "Your sin doesn't matter." Grace says, "**Your sin has been forgiven at enormous cost, and Christ is now setting you free from its power.**"

We're accepted in Christ before we've reached maturity. But because we're accepted, God begins bringing our lives into agreement with our new identity.

Blameless Does Not Mean We Never Need Correction

Being without blame doesn't mean Christians never make a mistake, never stumble, or never need correction.

John wrote to believers in First John 1:8:

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Then verse 9 says:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The Christian life isn't pretending we have no sin. It's **walking in the light**. When God exposes something, we confess it. We don't defend it. We don't rename it. We don't blame everyone else. We bring it into the light and trust Christ to forgive and cleanse us.

Our confidence isn't that we've never failed. **Our confidence is that Jesus is faithful.**

But we also don't use forgiveness as an excuse to remain unchanged. The same Christ who forgives us cleanses us.

Before Him

Paul says we should be holy and without blame: "**Before him.**" This is a crucial phrase.

The goal isn't merely to appear holy before other people. It's possible to build an impressive Christian image while hiding an unhealthy inner life. We can learn the language. We can quote verses. We can know when to say "Amen." We can smile at church while silently planning someone's downfall.

Human beings see the outside. God sees the heart.

First Samuel 16:7 says:

"For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

God's purpose is that we should be holy before Him. In His presence. Under His gaze. With integrity between our public and private lives. That's challenging because we can fool people. We can't fool God.

But it's also comforting. God sees the battles no one else notices. He sees the temptation we resisted. He sees the quiet act of obedience. He sees the prayer whispered when no one was watching. He sees the motive of the heart. **We live before Him.**

Holiness Begins in the Heart

Jesus repeatedly confronted people who looked clean outwardly but were corrupt inwardly. Matthew 23:27 says:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres."

They looked beautiful outwardly. Inside, they were full of dead men's bones. That is **religious appearance without inward holiness**.

God doesn't merely want clean behaviour hiding a bitter heart. He wants truth in the inward parts. He wants love without hypocrisy. He wants obedience that flows from faith. He wants purity of heart.

Matthew 5:8 says:

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Biblical holiness begins inside and works outward.

Religion often begins outside and hopes nobody looks too closely inside.

"In Love"

The final words of Ephesians 1:4 are: **"In love."**

There is some debate about whether "in love" belongs at the end of verse 4 or introduces the thought in verse 5. The original manuscripts didn't contain the same punctuation and verse divisions we use today.

It can be understood as: **"Holy and without blame before him in love."** Or: **"In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."** Both ideas are true. God acted toward us in love. And God intends holiness to be expressed through love.

In fact, these two meanings work beautifully together. **God chose us in love so that we might become holy in love.**

Love is not the enemy of holiness. And holiness is not the enemy of love. Biblical holiness without love becomes cold religious pride. What people sometimes call love without holiness becomes permission to ignore whatever God has said.

Jesus joins holiness and love together. John 14:15 says: **"If ye love me, keep my commandments."**

Love obeys

Love tells the truth. Love refuses to celebrate what destroys people.

Love is patient

Kind. Merciful. Forgiving. Compassionate. Willing to bear burdens. Willing to restore.

The holiness God desires isn't harsh self-righteousness. It is **Christlike character formed in love.**

Chosen to Become Like Christ

Romans 8:29 says:

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

God's purpose is **conformity to Christ**. Jesus is the pattern. God isn't trying to make us into religious copies of one another. He's forming Christ in us.

That means holiness looks like Jesus.

Pure but approachable

Truthful but compassionate

Opposed sin but welcomed sinners

Confronted hypocrisy

Forgave the repentant

Served and washed feet

He prayed for His enemies. He obeyed the Father even unto death. That's holiness. It isn't merely avoiding contamination. It's **actively expressing the character of God**.

Chosen as a People

Ephesians wasn't written to one isolated individual. Paul wrote to the saints. The words "**us**" and "**we**" run throughout the passage. God's purpose is to create a **holy people** in Christ.

This follows the pattern of Israel. Deuteronomy 7:6 says:

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself."

Israel was chosen as a people. They were set apart from the nations. They were called to display God's character and preserve His covenant. But Israel's election didn't mean every Israelite automatically walked faithfully with God. They were chosen for covenant relationship, witness, obedience, and service.

In Christ, God is forming a people from every nation. First Peter 2:9 says:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people."

Why? **"That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."**

Chosen people have a purpose. **We're chosen to display God's character.**

Chosen Does Not Mean Proud

Being chosen should never produce **spiritual arrogance**. Israel sometimes treated election as though God's choice proved they were naturally superior to other nations.

But Deuteronomy 7:7 and 8 says:

"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people." "But because the LORD loved you."

They weren't chosen because they were impressive. They were chosen because God loved them and was faithful to His promise. The same is true for us.

First Corinthians 1:27 says:

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

God's choice leaves no room for boasting. If being chosen makes us look down on other people, we've misunderstood grace. The proper response is gratitude, humility, worship, and service.

Salvation Is Not Merely Escaping Hell

Many gospel presentations concentrate almost entirely on escaping judgment. Judgment is real. Hell is real. We need forgiveness. We need rescue. But **God's purpose is larger than keeping us out of punishment.** He is restoring His image in humanity. He is creating a people who reflect His Son.

Titus 2:14 says Christ:

"Gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity."

That is rescue from sin. But the verse continues: "**And purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**" That is rescue for holiness.

Christ died to
redeem

Christ died to purify

Christ died to create
a people eager to do
what is good

The cross doesn't merely change our destination. It changes our **ownership, identity, desires, and way of life.**

Grace Teaches Holiness

Some people fear that preaching grace will make Christians careless. But **biblical grace doesn't merely forgive. Grace teaches.**

Titus 2:11 and 12 says:

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly."

Grace teaches us to say no to ungodliness. Grace teaches us how to live. If our idea of grace never challenges our behaviour, it isn't Paul's doctrine of grace.

Grace meets us while we're sinners. Grace doesn't wait for us to clean ourselves before coming to Christ. But once grace receives us, **grace begins changing us.**

God loves us as we are, but He loves us too much to leave us enslaved to everything that was destroying us.

Holiness Is the Work of God

We must be careful not to turn holiness into self-salvation. Ephesians 1:4 begins with God's action. He chose us. He placed us in Christ. He purposed our holiness. **Holiness is God's work within us.**

Philippians 2:13 says:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

God works in our desires. God works in our actions. God gives the Holy Spirit. God uses His word. God corrects us. God strengthens us. God completes what He begins.

First Thessalonians 5:23 and 24 says: **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly."**
"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

Our confidence is in God's faithfulness. But that doesn't remove our responsibility. The previous verse says: **"Abstain from all appearance of evil."**

- God works in us
- We yield and obey
- We put off the old man
- We put on the new man
- We walk in the Spirit

Holiness Requires Our Cooperation

Ephesians 4:22 tells believers: **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man."**

Verse 24 says: **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."**

God creates the new man. But we're told to put off and put on.

Put away lying

Speak truth

Deal with anger

Stop stealing

Work honestly

Use words that build others up

Forgive one another

Walk in love

These commands don't contradict grace. They show what grace produces.

God's choice

establishes the purpose

The Holy Spirit

provides the power

The word

gives instruction

We respond

with faith and obedience

Holiness and the Holy Spirit

We can't become holy without the Holy Spirit. That sounds obvious, but we sometimes try anyway. We create rules. We grit our teeth. We rely on willpower. We promise we'll never do it again. Then three days later, here we are again, having a very familiar conversation with God.

Human determination has limits. The Holy Spirit changes us from within.

Second Corinthians 3:18 says:

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image."

How? **"Even as by the Spirit of the Lord."** The Spirit forms Christ's character in us.

Galatians 5 calls this: **"The fruit of the Spirit."**

Love	Joy	Peace
Longsuffering	Gentleness	Goodness
Faith	Meekness	Temperance

Holiness isn't a personality transplant produced by pressure. It's the fruit of the Spirit produced as we **abide in Christ and walk with God.**

Holiness and the Word

Jesus prayed in John 17:17:

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

God uses His word to sanctify us.



**The word exposes
false thinking**

It corrects our desires
and reveals God's
character.



It shows us Christ

It identifies sin and
renews the mind.



**It equips us for
good works**

Preparing us for every
good work God has
prepared.

We can't continually feed our minds on everything opposed to God and then wonder why spiritual growth seems difficult. What we repeatedly hear shapes what we believe. What we believe shapes how we live. **God's word brings our thinking into agreement with His truth.**

Holiness and Discipline

Hebrews 12:10 says God disciplines us: "**For our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.**"

God's correction is part of His purpose. Nobody enjoys discipline. Hebrews admits that it doesn't feel joyful at the time. But **discipline is evidence that God is treating us as sons.** He doesn't correct us because He has abandoned His purpose. He corrects us because He remains committed to it.

Sometimes we pray, "Lord, make me more like Jesus." Then God allows a difficult person into our life, and we say, "Not like that."

Patience

has to be practised
somewhere

Forgiveness

requires someone to
forgive

Faith

grows where circumstances
require trust

God uses His word, His Spirit, suffering, correction, relationships, and church life to shape us.

Holy and Without Blame at Christ's Coming

There is also a **future dimension** to Ephesians 1:4. God's purpose will be completed when Christ presents His people before Himself.

Colossians 1:21 and 22 says:

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in his sight."

Notice the same language - holy, unblameable, in His sight. Reconciliation through Christ's death has a goal. Christ will present His people before God.

Jude 24 says God is able: **"To present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."**

That's where God's purpose is heading. One day the work will be complete.

No hidden sin	No mixed motives
No temptation	No bitterness
No fear	No remaining stain

We will be like Christ because we will see Him as He is.

Does God Choose Us Because We Are Holy?

No. The verse doesn't say God chose us because we were holy. It says He chose us: **"That we should be holy."** Holiness is the purpose, not the qualification.

God didn't wait for us to become holy before choosing to save us. Romans 5:8 says: **"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** We came to Christ as sinners. We were forgiven by grace. But the grace that forgives begins making us holy.

This protects us from two errors.

The first error

says we must become good enough before God will accept us. That's works-based salvation.

The second error

says because God accepts us by grace, holiness doesn't matter. That's grace without transformation.

Ephesians 1:4 rejects both. We're chosen in Christ by grace. And we're chosen for holiness.

Can Someone Claim to Be Chosen While Rejecting Holiness?

Scripture never encourages us to claim election while deliberately rejecting God. Second Timothy 2:19 says:

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

That gives assurance. But the verse continues: **"And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."**

God knows His people. And God's people are called to depart from sin. We don't prove we're chosen by endlessly arguing about election. We show the fruit of God's work by continuing in faith and allowing Christ to change us.

Jesus said: **"By their fruits ye shall know them."** Fruit doesn't purchase salvation. Fruit reveals life.

What About Christians Who Still Struggle?

Ephesians 1:4 can feel intimidating. Holy and without blame? We look at ourselves and think, "Paul clearly hasn't seen my week." But the verse should give us **hope rather than despair**.

God knew what He was choosing when He called us in Christ. He knew our weakness. He knew our history. He knew the habits that would take time to overcome. He knew where we would stumble. And He still purposed holiness. **That means our present struggle isn't the end of the story.**

Philippians 1:6 says:

"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

God finishes what He begins. The answer isn't to surrender to sin. The answer is to keep coming to Christ.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 01 | 02 |
| Confess quickly | Get back up |
| Receive forgiveness | Renew the mind |
| 03 | 04 |
| Walk in the Spirit | Seek help when necessary |
| Remove what continually pulls you back | Stay connected to other believers |

Don't turn one failure into a six-month holiday from God.

Conviction Is Not Condemnation

The Holy Spirit convicts us because God is committed to holiness.

Condemnation says:

"You're filthy. God doesn't want you. You may as well give up."

Condemnation **drives us away.**

Conviction says:

"This is wrong. Bring it into the light. Christ has made a better way. Turn back to God."

Conviction **calls us home.**

Romans 8:1 says there is no condemnation in Christ. But Romans 8 also calls us to put to death the deeds of the body through the Spirit.

No condemnation doesn't mean no correction. It means correction happens within a relationship secured by Christ. God corrects His children because they belong to Him.

Holiness Affects Everyday Life

Holiness isn't only about what happens during a church service.

How we speak to our family

How we respond when offended

How we use money

What we watch. What we joke about.

How we work

When nobody is supervising

Whether we tell the truth

When lying would be easier

How we treat people

Who can't benefit us

Whether we forgive

Whether we keep our word

God's purpose is to bring every area under the **lordship of Christ**. We don't divide life into sacred and ordinary. Everything belongs to Him.

Holiness Is Beautiful

Holiness is sometimes presented as though God's purpose is to remove every enjoyable thing from life. But **sin is the destroyer**. Sin breaks marriages. Sin damages children. Sin produces shame. Sin enslaves. Sin ruins trust. Sin hardens the heart. Sin promises freedom and quietly builds a prison.

Holiness is God restoring us to life. It produces peace with a clean conscience. Faithfulness in relationships. Freedom from secret bondage. Honest speech. Love without manipulation. Strength without cruelty. Purity without shame.

Holiness isn't God trying to make us miserable. It's God rescuing us from what was making us miserable while convincing us it was freedom.

The Church Should Reflect God's Choice

Ephesians is concerned not only with individual holiness but with the **holiness of the church**. God chose a people in Christ. That people should display His wisdom, grace, unity, truth, and love.

Ephesians 4:1 says: "**Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.**" Then Paul speaks about humility, meekness, patience, and unity.

A holy church isn't merely a church with strict rules. It's a church where people tell the truth. Forgive one another. Carry burdens. Reject corruption. Protect the vulnerable. Restore the fallen. Refuse gossip. Walk in love. Remain faithful to Christ. **Holiness is both moral and relational.**

Chosen for Love

Paul says we're to be holy and without blame: "**In love.**" Ephesians returns to love repeatedly.

Walk in love

Speak the truth in love

Forbear one another in love

Be rooted and grounded in love

Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it

Love isn't an optional decoration added to holiness. It is central to holiness. First Corinthians 13 says we can speak with impressive gifts, understand mysteries, and even make enormous sacrifices, yet without love we are nothing.

A person may defend correct doctrine and still behave in an unholy way. Truth matters. But the truth must shape our conduct. The holy person doesn't merely win the argument. **The holy person becomes like Christ.**

The Verse Behind the Verse

So what is behind Ephesians 1:4?

God's eternal purpose

Christ, God's chosen servant

Israel, chosen to be a holy nation

The spotless sacrifice

The priesthood and tabernacle set apart to God

The command: "Be ye holy; for I am holy"

The failure of human beings to produce holiness through the flesh

The promise of a new heart and a new Spirit

The cross, where the spotless Lamb gave Himself for sinners

Justification, by which the guilty are declared righteous in Christ

Sanctification, by which the Holy Spirit transforms our lives

The future presentation of the church, holy and without blemish before Christ

And holding everything together are the words: "**In him.**"

God's choice is in Christ. God's acceptance is in Christ. God's power to transform is in Christ. God's final purpose will be completed in Christ.

Conclusion

Let's read Ephesians 1:4 again:

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

God's purpose in Christ is not just rescue. It is **holiness**.

He didn't choose us because we were already holy. He chose us so that we should become holy. He didn't forgive us so we could remain comfortable in the sin that once enslaved us. He forgave us so that we could be restored to His purpose. He didn't merely save us from judgment. He brought us into His Son. And in His Son, He is creating a people who reflect His character.

Holy

Without blame

Living before Him

Walking in love

We're not there yet. But God's purpose was established before the foundation of the world. Christ has paid the price. The Holy Spirit is at work. And God will complete what He began.

We have been chosen in the Holy One so that His holiness may be seen in us.