

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** A Three-Fold Cord

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Ephesians 1:2-14

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1313

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Salvation is a wonderful thing.
  - i) It's a wonderful thing to know that God would save us.
  - ii) It's an even greater thing to know that we can be saved and know that we're saved.
    - (1) We don't have to say, "I hope I'm saved," "I think I'm saved," or "Maybe I'm saved."
    - (2) We can praise God knowing that we're saved.
- b) Not only can we be saved and know that we're saved, but we can also know without a shadow of any doubt that we can never lose our salvation.
  - i) Not only does God save us by His grace, but He also keeps us by His grace.
- c) God binds us to Himself with a three-fold cord.
  - i) The Bible says that a threefold cord is not easily broken.
    - (1) Ecclesiastes 4:12
- d) Ephesians 1:2-14
  - i) This is the longest sentence in the Bible.
    - (1) It begins with grace, and it ends with glory.
    - (2) It is the most complete statement in the Gospel.
  - ii) In these verses, the Apostle Paul mentions God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit and what part each have in our salvation and in our security.
  - iii) The Apostle Paul can't stop talking about what we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - iv) These verses make up a hymn of praise to the Trinity.
    - (1) In verse 6, Paul speaks of God the Father.
      - (a) Praise to the Father.
    - (2) In verse 12, Paul speaks about what God the Son has done.
      - (a) Praise to the Son.
    - (3) In verse 14, Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit.
      - (a) Praise to the Holy Spirit.
  - v) Today's message will take a closer look at this threefold cord that we find in Ephesians 1:2-14.

2) THE FIRST CORD: OUR SALVATION HAS BEEN PLANNED BY THE FATHER  
(EPHESIANS 1:3-5)

- a) When did He choose us?
  - i) Ephesians 1:3-4
    - (1) God the Father planned our salvation before He laid the foundations of the world.
    - (2) Our salvation was in the mind of God.
      - (a) Ephesians 1:4
        - (i) God is love, and love is not content to live alone.
        - (ii) So, we have been chosen.

- ii) Ephesians 1:5
  - (1) We have been predestinated.
    - (a) Many people are confused by this, but we should be blessed by it.
  - (2) God has chosen you to be saved.
    - (a) This does not mean that God chose one sinner above another sinner.
    - (b) It means that God had you in His heart and in His mind before the foundations of the world.
    - (c) This does not mean that some people are predestined to go to Hell and others are predestined to go to Heaven.
      - (i) There's not a man, woman, boy or girl on planet Earth that God doesn't want saved.
      - (ii) Anyone who comes to the Lord Jesus Christ can be saved.
        - 1. No one is chosen to be lost.
        - 2. If anyone is lost, it is because they will not come to Christ.
      - (iii) Jesus did not simply die for the elect; He died for the sins of the world.
        - 1. 1 John 2:2
          - a. God wants all people saved.
        - 2. 1 Timothy 2:3-4
          - a. God wills that everybody be saved.
        - 3. 2 Peter 3:9
      - (iv) The Holy Spirit of God convicts every person.
        - 1. John 16:8
      - (v) The Bible says that Christ is that "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."
        - 1. John 1:9
        - 2. Therefore, everybody is invited to come to Jesus.
      - (vi) Revelation 22:17
        - 1. "The Spirit" in this passage is speaking of the Holy Spirit.
        - 2. "The bride" speaks of the church.
        - 3. If you want God, you can have Him.
- iii) The death of Jesus is sufficient for all, but it is only efficient to those who believe.
- iv) We were in the heart and mind of God before He created this planet.
  - (1) God gives everyone an invitation to come to Christ.
  - (2) We can only choose Him because He first chose us.
  - (3) He chose us before the foundation of the world.
- b) Why did He choose us?
  - i) Ephesians 1:4
  - ii) The greatest miracle in the world is not walking on water or changing water into wine.
    - (1) It is taking a Hell-bound sinner and transforming him and making him holy and blameless.

- iii) When God looks at us, we are holy and without blame in love.
- iv) God cannot see our sin through the blood of Jesus Christ.
  - (1) Romans 8:33
- c) Wherefore has He chosen us?
  - i) Ephesians 1:5
    - (1) We are predestinated to be like the Lord Jesus.
  - ii) Predestination is not saying that this person will go to Heaven and that person will go to Hell.
    - (1) Predestination says that those who trust the Lord Jesus will be like the Lord Jesus.
  - iii) Predestination teaches us that, on the authority of the Word of God, because He chose us and because we have trusted Him, it is settled forever that we are going to be like the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (1) This settles the question of eternal security.
      - (a) If we are predestinated to be adopted into the family of God, then nothing can stop it or stand in the way.
      - (2) We have been chosen to be like the Lord Jesus.
- d) We are predestinated to the adoption of sons.
  - i) Ephesians 1:5
  - ii) We are spiritually born into the family of God.
    - (1) This deals with our position in Christ.
  - iii) We are legally adopted into the family of God.
    - (1) This deals with our privileges in Christ.
  - iv) We are both born into the family of God and adopted into the family of God.
    - (1) At the time when this passage of Scripture was written, a man may have had many wives.
      - (a) Some of his wives may have been slaves; therefore, not all of his sons would have been heirs.
        - (i) Only the sons that were freeborn (not the sons of slaves) would have been heirs.
      - (2) If the man wanted one of the slave sons to be his heir, then there had to be a legal ceremony to make that son (who was his son in the flesh) his legal son.
        - (a) So, a son might be physically born but then legally adopted.
- e) We are accepted in the beloved.
  - i) Ephesians 1:6
  - ii) We have been chosen in the past, predestined to the future and accepted in the present.
  - iii) Jesus is the beloved.
    - (1) Matthew 17:5
  - iv) We are accepted before God the Father because we are accepted in the beloved.
    - (1) Therefore, God loves us as much as He loves Jesus.

- (a) John 17:23
    - (i) God loves us like He loves His own Son.
  - v) We are part of the body of Christ.
    - (1) Therefore, if God loves His Son, then He has to love us because we are the body of Christ.
  - f) What should all of this cause us to do?
    - i) Ephesians 1:6
      - (1) God does this to the praise of the glory of His grace.
    - ii) This should cause our hearts and souls to swell up with passionate, emotional praise to God the Father.
      - (1) We should praise the glory of His grace.
- 3) THE SECOND CORD: OUR SALVATION HAS BEEN PURCHASED BY GOD THE SON (EPHESIANS 1:7-12, 14)
- a) Ephesians 1:7-12, 14
    - i) Our salvation has been planned by the Father and purchased by the Son.
  - b) We were children of slaves.
    - i) Adam was a slave of Satan.
      - (1) He sold his birthright to Satan.
    - ii) But Jesus redeemed us with His blood.
  - c) We have been freed by the blood of Jesus.
    - i) Ephesians 1:7
      - (1) Jesus bought us back with His blood.
    - ii) We have come from sinful slaves to saintly sons.
  - d) We are forgiven by His grace.
    - i) Ephesians 1:7
      - (1) “According to the riches of His grace.”
    - ii) The word “forgive” means “to carry away.”
    - iii) In the Old Testament, they had what they called scapegoats.
      - (1) On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would take one goat and lay his hands upon the head of that goat and confess the sins of the people.
      - (2) The high priest would then lay his hands on the head of another goat and confess the sins of the people.
      - (3) Then, one goat would be killed, and the blood of that one goat would be sprinkled on the mercy seat in the tabernacle.
      - (4) The other goat would be led far away into the wilderness and turned loose to be lost forever in the wilderness.
      - (5) Through this, God was showing us that our sins, redeemed by the blood, are carried away, never to be brought back again.
        - (a) This is the grace of God that does this, in whom we have forgiveness.
  - e) We are filled with His wisdom.
    - i) Ephesians 1:8-9

- ii) As Christians and because we're saved, God gives us His mind; and we have an insight into the things of God.
    - (1) Only the saints can understand our existence here on Earth.
    - (2) To everybody else, history is a mystery.
      - (a) Only the saints know the truth.
  - iii) God's plan concerns us, but it centers on Jesus.
    - (1) Ephesians 1:10
      - (a) The word "dispensation" means "in the plan of the fullness of times."
      - (b) One day in the last glorious age, God is going to bring everything into harmony.
        - (i) At that time, the world is going to be free from stress.
        - (ii) There is coming a time when everything is going to be in tune with Jesus.
    - (2) People wonder what the world is coming to.
      - (a) It's coming to Jesus.
    - (3) If everything is in tune with Jesus, then everything will be in tune with itself and with one another.
    - (4) In the fullness of time, God is going to bring together the spiritual and the material.
      - (a) God will bring together Heaven and Earth.
      - (b) God will bring together Himself and man.
  - iv) All of this is because of what the Lord Jesus Christ did on the cross.
- f) We are fixed with His wealth.
- i) Ephesians 1:11-12
  - ii) One day, the riches of His grace (which we enjoy now) will turn into the riches of His glory.
    - (1) He uses the word "predestined."
      - (a) It cannot be stopped.
    - (2) We have an inheritance that is predestined for us.
      - (a) It is all because God the Son purchased us.
- g) Ephesians 1:14
- i) "The purchased possession"
    - (1) In this we have freedom, forgiveness, fellowship, the wisdom of God, and the full inheritance of the children of God.
- 4) THE THIRD CORD: OUR SALVATION PRESERVED BY GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT (EPHESIANS 1:13-14)
- a) Ephesians 1:13-14
    - i) The word "earnest" means "pledge" or "down payment."
    - ii) The word "sealed" here is a legal term.
      - (1) In Bible times when a seal was put on a document, it meant three things:
        - (a) There had been a finished transaction.

- (b) Ownership had been transferred.
  - (c) The document was secure and sure.
- b) When we were saved:
  - i) It meant that there's a finished transaction.
    - (1) Jesus paid it all.
    - (2) It is a purchased possession.
  - ii) It meant that now we belong to Him.
    - (1) We are adopted legally into His family.
    - (2) Ownership is there.
  - iii) It meant that because the seal is there, it is fixed and sure.
    - (1) Esther 8:8 illustrates this type of seal:
      - (a) A king would have a ring with his insignia on it.
      - (b) When a document was written, they would roll it up and put hot wax on the margin.
      - (c) The king's ring would be put in that hot wax, leaving his insignia on the document.
      - (d) This would be irreversible.
        - (i) If that's true of an earthly king, how much truer is it of the Heavenly King?
        - (ii) We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.
- c) Our salvation is preserved by the Spirit.
  - i) Ephesians 1:14
    - (1) The "earnest of the Spirit"
      - (a) The word "earnest" means "a down payment," "sow," or "a pledge."
  - ii) When a person puts up a sizeable sum of money for a down payment to buy a house, that means that he is coming back for the whole thing.
    - (1) The Holy Spirit that we have in our heart, who seals us into Christ, is also the earnest; the pledge that one day our Lord is coming back for His purchased possession.
      - (a) He's coming back for us because He has so much invested in us.
      - (b) He put the down payment in our hearts.
  - iii) This Scripture also says "until" the redemption, not "if."
    - (1) The heartaches of this world are but a stepping stone along a trail that's winding always upward.
    - (2) This troubled world is not our final home.
      - (a) This is unto the praise of His glory.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) Paul mentions what God the Father did.
  - i) Ephesians 1:6
    - (1) He did it to the praise of His glory.
- b) He mentions what God the Son did.
  - i) Ephesians 1:12
    - (1) To the praise of His glory.

- c) He mentions what God the Spirit does.
  - i) Ephesians 1:14
    - (1) To the praise of His glory.
- d) God deserves our praise for this great salvation that we have in the Lord Jesus.
  - i) Psalm 150:6
  - ii) A threefold cord cannot be broken.
    - (1) Ecclesiastes 4:12
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16