**The Orphanage**

Recently teaching out of Ephesians 1:1-14, we came across the word “predestined” two times, plus a phrase “before the foundation of the world”. So what was God’s ancient, prehistoric plan? God’s plan was to visit the orphanage, and invite all to live with him. God loves you (John 3:16). God wants to save you (1Timothy 2:4). Jesus died so that you might have that potential to be saved (1Tim. 2:6). So why are not all saved? God is leaving the orphanage (the world), but not all are willing to follow him out. But those who choose to follow his son, have been adopted into his family. A family predestined to be “holy and blameless”(Eph.1:4).

The plan: “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.” Everyone “in Christ” now knows that their destiny is to be “holy and blameless”. These are big words. “Holy” is a high, lofty ideal, but reachable. Like husband and wife, so Christians are to be his bride, who dedicates herself to serve him and him alone. “Blameless” is to live with a clean conscience as you practice the teachings of Christ. Here then are two reasons, “holy and blameless”, that keep people from being adopted. They don’t want to be a part of the family striving for, “holy and blameless”. But there is unconditional love in this family, because everyone in this family has been loved unconditionally by God himself.

The church at Ephesus were made up of people that believed in Jesus and were taught of him (Eph. 4:21). They repented of their evil practices, “many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.” (Acts 19:19). You can’t be holy and practice voodoo. No. And they were baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38, 19:1-17). They are now a part of the church, practicing a blameless life. God has a plan for these people, a plan that goes back before the foundation of the world. These are God’s people, adopted, redeemed, loved, holy, forgiven. God’s plan was to go to the orphanage and take them all home, but not all are willing. They would rather live in the sin of this world; hate, lust, pride, crime, evil. This is the daily news! Are you living for this world? Why not be adopted? Why not be born again, of the water and the spirit? The church is kind of like an assembly of born again people at a bus station, singing, praying, caring for each other, remembering Jesus, waiting for our bus to go home to live with him forever. God has not predetermined your adoption, you must choose. He leaves that up to you. But once you do, then he has a predetermined plan for you. Dan Peters