



**KING'S
CHURCH**
EDINBURGH

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Chosen

In **Ephesians 1:3-14** Paul gives us a perspective that is bigger than we can truly comprehend - from before the beginning of time (*verses 4, 5, 11*) to eternity to come (*10, 14*). He is emphatic that every Christian has been chosen by God, and that this perspective should cause us to praise God, be peaceful, and persevere in our following of Jesus.

The life of Joseph in the Old Testament is a helpful demonstration of what this looks like. Joseph was born into a family living with God's promises and was given dreams by God (none of which was up to him), and through a series of events that he would not have chosen ended up in the only place in which he could save his family. His assessment of what happened to him was, *"you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good"* (*Genesis 50:20*). His story ends as it began, beyond his control, as his bones are returned to the Promised Land centuries after his death. In the same way, Paul says we were chosen before the beginning of time, and will be brought into God's Kingdom after our deaths by His power. We have choices to make which are real, significant, and have consequences, but the author and main actor in the story of our lives is God.

Questions:

- Why do you think Luke explained this doctrine through telling a story rather than a point-by-point explanation of Paul's phrases?
- Can you think of other stories in the Bible that show God's choosing in a similar way to Joseph's?

- Why do you think many people find this subject uncomfortable when Paul sees it as such a source of praise?
- Luke said that knowing we're chosen by God should cause us to praise, be peaceful, and persevere - which of these three are you most wanting to grow in, and how can this teaching help you do that?
- Knowing that God is sovereign never lessened Paul's evangelistic zeal (see Acts 18:9-11) - why should it give us confidence in what God has called us to do?
(Further reading: Evangelism and The Sovereignty of God, J.I. Packer, InterVarsity Press.)
- Are we comfortable with living with mystery, as *Deuteronomy 29:29* suggests we should be?



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