



God has brought about real transformation in our lives as we learned and prayed about the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Agree?

Our study through Ephesians is a deep look at our amazing God, His blessings, and plans for His church family. As you shepherd people, please pray for God's continued work to shape and work through us.

Most of you will modify the curriculum in ways that fit your people. Sometimes one good question is enough. The Holy Spirit will lead you to prepare as needed. Here are a few thoughts about the questions in our notes.

LEARN FROM THE BIBLE, GOD'S WORD

Read Ephesians 1:1-14. Consider the following questions from Ephesians chapter one.

Especially in the first chapter, it is important that we understand the recipients of the letter. Read 1:1-2 and record below what we learn about them. Look up the meaning of any word you think is critical. Also, it is important that you remember who they are as you read the first 14 verses.

Paul begins and continues to write to and about those who are "in Christ." He is writing to those who have heard the gospel and chosen to believe (v. 13). So, the following blessings apply to them and them only.

A "saint" is a "holy one." According to verse four, all those who believe in Jesus Christ (see 13) are made holy.

According to verse 13, when is someone included "in Christ?"

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit

Reread verses 3-14 and list the words that point to the fact that God has a masterplan for those who are "in Christ." (For example, "has blessed us" in verse three is something God did in the past.)

Examples

"Chose" – God chose that all who believe would "holy and blameless"

"Predestined" – This is the destiny that God planned for all who believe

"according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan" – God's master plan

Much of this chapter is about the "spiritual blessings" that God has planned for those who are "in Christ." List those blessings found in verses 4-14. (We will focus more on this next week.) (By the way, I count seven blessings.)

- that it was God's choice that all who are "in Christ" because they "believed in Him" (13) would **be holy and blameless before Him.**
- That it was God's master plan that "all who believed in Him" and are therefore "in Christ" would **be predestined for adoption** (i.e. full sonship) which includes "inheritance" (11)

- All who are “in Him” have **redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses** [Greek *paraptoma* = trespasses, transgression] and because of God’s **grace lavished upon us** (i.e. not by our works)
- To those “in Christ” God has **made known to us the mystery of His will**, that in the **fullness of time to unite all things in Christ**.
- “In Him” **we have obtained an inheritance**, as a part of His **predestination** which is **according to God’s purpose and will**.
- These blessings from God to those who put their **hope in Christ** (12) result in **the praise of His glory**.
- **When you heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation and believed in Him, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it.**
- **ALL OF THIS IS to the praise of His glory.**

According to verses 3-6, what do we learn about God and what is Paul’s response to God and His blessings?

Too much to list today

DISCUSS TOGETHER

The first of God’s “blessings” is “that we should be holy and blameless before Him.” What might this be first? (By the way, the ‘How this happens’ is in verses 7-10)

The second “blessing” is that God planned (set as our destination) for us to be adopted as children (with full rights). What does this tell us about God? About what He wants for and with us?

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

This week, read and reread these amazing and eternal blessings. Take time to be with God to thank and praise Him for “His glorious grace.”

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for the people being baptized at Forest Home on Sunday
- Pray for our Middle and High Schoolers learning to follow Jesus
- Pray for our Global Partners serving in challenging places