

EPHESIANS

WEEK 1: EPHESIANS 1:1-14

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

- The apostle Paul writes to the believes in Ephesus whom he calls saints and faithful in Christ.
- After Paul hears of their faith in Christ, his prayer is that they may receive a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of God.
- Paul's desire is for them to know God and what He has done for them – how He has blessed them with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places from eternity past.
- All these blessings are in Christ, made possible through His resurrection and are secured by Him seeing that He is now enthroned in Heaven far above all rule and authority and power and dominion.
- As believers, we are to grow in the knowledge of God and the blessing with which He has blessed us.
- We are to know the hope of His calling, the riches of His inheritance in the saints, and the greatness of His power toward us who believe.
- As believer, we are called to grow into Christ who is our head and thus know our role and proper function in the body.
- We are to know that salvation is not of ourselves but it is the grace of God who chose us before the foundation of the world, called us to imitate Him in holiness, and to depend on His strength for victory in the spiritual warfare.

- **Class Schedule:**

○ July 12:	Ephesians 1:1-14	Redemption in Christ
○ July 19:	Ephesians 1:15-2:10	Position in Christ
○ July 26:	Ephesians 2:11-3:21	Oneness of Jew and Gentile
○ August 2:	Ephesians 4:1-16	Preservation of Unity
○ August 9:	Ephesians 4:17-32	Walk in Righteousness
○ August 16:	Ephesians 5:1-21	Walk in Love, Light, Wisdom
○ August 23:	Ephesians 5:22-6:9	Walk and Relationships
○ August 30:	Ephesians 6:10-24	Armor and Epilogue

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS

“The Letter to the Ephesians is a marvelously concise, yet comprehensive summary of the Christian good news and its implications. Nobody can read it without being moved to wonder and worship.”

— John Stott, *“The Message of Ephesians”*

“There is no book more full of doctrine and experience than this brief epistle. He who would understand the mystery of the Church, let him read Ephesians.”

— C.H. Spurgeon, *Sermon on Ephesians*

- This is the first of two letters to this church in Scripture! There is no 2nd Ephesians.... Revelation 2:1-6
- Paul wrote this letter around 60-62 AD, Jesus wrote the other around 30 years later.
- This was part of Paul’s group of “Prison epistles” he wrote while imprisoned in Rome awaiting his trial.
 - Philippians 1:7; Colossians 4:10; and Philemon 9.
 - You might notice some similar themes between all of them.
 - **Tychicus** delivered both of the letters for Ephesus and Colossae (Eph 6:21-22; Col 4:7-9)
- Acts 18:16 ~ [and he \[Apollos\] began speaking boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately to him.](#)
- The church in Ephesus likely began with the ministry of this godly couple discipling Apollos on Paul’s second missionary journey.
- Paul visited here on his third journey in Acts 19 and spent 3 years establishing the church (Acts 20:31).
 - 1 and 2 Timothy were written by Paul to Timothy, one of the early pastors in this church, to speak against the false teaching rising up among the congregation (1 Tim 1:3, 20)
- Unlike so many of the letters Paul wrote, this one doesn’t deal with a particular problem.
- Purpose:
 - For the church to **grow in understanding** (1:15-19) of their position in Christ
 - For the church to walk worthy of their calling in Christ (4:1)
- “Paul writes Ephesians to his mainly Gentile Christian readers ... with the intention of **informing, strengthening, and encouraging them** by assuring them of their place within the gracious, saving purpose of God, and **urging them to bring their lives into conformity** with this divine plan of summing up all things in Christ”¹

¹ Peter O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 57.

GOD'S CHARACTER IN 1:1-14

- Forgiver (1:7)
- Abounding grace ((1:6-8)
- Wise (1:8)
- Kind intentions (1:9)
- Orderly (1:10)
- Glorious (1:6, 12, 14)
- Promise-keeper (1:13)

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 1

- **1:1-2 Prescript**
- **1:3-14 Praise to God for all He has done**
 - 1:3-6 Predestination by God the Father
 - 1:7-10 Redemption by God the Son
 - 1:11-14 Assurance by God the Spirit
- **1:15-23 Prayer of Thanksgiving to God**
 - 1:15-19 for wisdom and knowledge of Him
 - 1:20-23 because of the power of God in Christ Jesus

PRESCRIPT (1:1-2)

- Sender
 - Paul
 - Apostle² of Christ Jesus
 - Apostle by the will of God
- Recipient
 - Saints
 - In Ephesus
 - Faithful
 - In Christ Jesus
- Greeting
 - Grace and Peace
 - To you
 - From God our Father= the Lord Jesus Christ

² Benjamin L. Merkle, Ephesians, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough, Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament (B&H Academic, 2016), 12. “The semitechnical use refers to **leaders who were commissioned by Jesus or the church** (James [1 Cor 15:7; Gal 1:19]; Barnabas [1 Cor 15:5–6; cf. Acts 14:4, 14], and possibly Apollos [1 Cor 4:6, 9] and Andronicus and Junia [Rom 16:7]). The nontechnical use refers to **a messenger, representative, or emissary who is on a temporary assignment** (Epaphroditus [Phil 2:25] and Titus’s two companions [2 Cor 8:23]).

PRAISE TO GOD FOR ALL HE HAS DONE (1:3-14)

- Every Spiritual Blessing
- In the heavenly places
- In Christ

Predestination by God the Father (3-6)

- He chose us Why, How, When? (4, 9)
- He predestined us For what? (5, 11)
- He favored (graced) us Unto what? (vv 2, 6-8)
- through Jesus how? (vv 5, 6)
- According to his will what? (vv 1, 5, 9, 11)
- to the praise of his glory (vv 6, 12, 14)

Redemption by God the Son (7-10)

- He redeemed
- He forgave
- He made known
- Through his blood
- In all Wisdom and insight
- Mystery of His will (in the context of wisdom, insight, good pleasure, setting forth, plan in time, plan in bringing all things together, plan in accordance with his will (11)
- Administered

Assurance by God the Spirit (11-14)

- He gave an inheritance- we are claimed by God
- Purpose of his glory
- Sealed with the Spirit
- Given a pledge (first installment)
- Guarantee of our inheritance

THEMES:

What is a Saint? (1:1, 15, 18...)

- Faithful believers who are set apart for God's purposes.
- Same root as the noun for holy. These are those who are holy-fied by God.
- Not venerated by a church, but declared righteous by God because of Christ's authority and effective work to redeem sinners to be set apart and cleansed.
- These are made one IN CHRIST; a union formed where before there was enmity (Eph 2:1-3)

God's Purposes and Will (1:9, 11)

- Prothesis (intention and plan laid out beforehand) 1:9, 11
 - God's **designs** in advance)
 - "according to his purpose"
- Boule (result of deliberate determination) 1:11
 - God's **decision** to carry out his will
 - "according to the counsel..."
- Thelema (heart's desire) 1:1, 5, 9, 11
 - God's **desire** to carry out his plan of salvation
 - "...of his will"
- Behind God's plans is not just a mastermind, but a heart of love³

Mystery of His will (1:9)

- Not a mystery like a detective cracking the case and tracking the clues to crack the codes
- But the revelation of God's designs, previously hidden, now made known (in Christ)
- Unrevealed truth now made clear.
- Not hard to understand, but it is an unexpected truth that we find difficult because it is undeserved!

Col 1:25-27 ~ Paul was made a minister... "so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of the word of God, 26that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, 27to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*"

- In Ephesians 3, Paul will explain that a major part of the gospel, the truth of God's salvation, includes not just Jews, but Gentiles also!!

Ephesians 3:4-6 ~ By referring to this,
when you read you can understand my insight into the **mystery of Christ,**
5 which **in other generations was not made known** to the sons of men,
as **it has now been revealed** to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;
6 **to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body,**
and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

- This mystery should not remain hidden, but should be proclaimed to all people.

³ John MacArthur, *MacArthur's Quick Reference Guide to the Bible*, 238.

In Christ (1:1, 3-7, 11-13)

- 6x “in Him” 1:4-13,
- 4x “In Christ” in chapter 1
- 1x “In the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:15)
- Context:
 - Faith/faithful in Christ (1, 15)
 - Blessed in Christ (3)
 - God chose us in Him (4)
 - God predestined us *through* Him (4)
 - The Father redeemed the church in Him (7)
 - God purposed/ set forth his kind intentions in Him (9)
 - Summing up of all things are IN CHRIST (10)
 - God has pre-promised an already-obtained inheritance in Him (11)
 - We hope in Christ (12)
 - The believer’s listening and believing the truth of the gospel is in Christ (12)
 - The church is sealed in Him with the Spirit (13)
- In summary: Believers have a new identity based on the benevolent actions of God that unite them to Christ because of Christ, for the praise and glory of Christ, unto holiness like Christ, with a hope based on Christ’s person and work, promised because of Christ.... Christ is the focus of the believers life.
- All of these blessings are from God, but not on any other basis, source, relationship, union, future, purpose, intention, other than tied to Christ.
- “To enter the presence of a holy God, we must be hidden in the righteousness of Christ. To be "in Christ" means that God no longer sees our imperfections; He sees the righteousness of His own Son ([Ephesians 2:13](#); [Hebrews 8:12](#)). Only "in Christ" is our sin debt cancelled, our relationship with God restored, and our eternity secured ([John 3:16-18](#), [20:31](#)).”⁴

⁴ <https://www.gotquestions.org/in-Christ.html>

The Holy Spirit (1:13-14)

- God (Father) is the primary subject of this section, with the action of the Son in view, but the Spirit also is fully engaged in the church's redemption.
- The Spirit is promised (cf. John 16) and how the Father seals the believer in Jesus (13)
 - “identification of ownership. ... God is to be blessed because he seals believers, claiming them as his own, and securing their future inheritance. See also [Eph 4:30](#) and [2 Cor 1:22](#) where this verb is used in a similar context.”⁵
- The Spirit is given as a pledge of our inheritance (14)
 - Pledge: “first installment,” “deposit,” “down payment,” “pledge” ([BDAG 134c–d](#)).
 - The term often refers to “payment of part of a purchase price in advance” ([BDAG 134c](#)).
 - In the New Testament the word occurs also in 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5, passages from which we learn that when God deposited the Spirit in the hearts of his children he obligated himself to bestow upon them subsequently the full remainder of all the blessings of salvation merited for them by the atoning sacrifice of Christ.⁶
 - As a result, we benefit from the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5)

⁵ Benjamin L. Merkle, *Ephesians*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough, *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament* (B&H Academic, 2016), 35.

⁶ William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of Ephesians*, vol. 7, *New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953–2001), 92.

TWO PERSPECTIVES OF THE SOVEREIGN SALVATION OF GOD:

God

- 3-Bestowed blessing (provided benefits) in Christ
- 4-Divinely chose before the foundation of the world in Christ
- 4-Had perfect intentions for his chosen
- 5-predestined
- 5-Adopted to himself Sons
- 5-Acts according to the kind intention of His will
- 6-Receives praise regarding the glory of His grace
- 6-Freely bestows grace
- 7-Redeems
- 7-Forgives
- 7-His grace is rich
- 8-He lavishes his rich grace
- 8-He is wise and great in understanding
- 9-He reveals His will once concealed
- 9-His intentions are kind and purposeful and operate through Christ
- 10-He works all things orderly and arranges his plans precisely in coordination with his design
- 10-His design culminates in Christ in every realm
- 11- He has predetermined to give an inheritance according to his purpose
- 11-He works all things after the counsel of His will
- 12-His final purposes bring praise in his glory
- 13- He distributed a message of truth that was heard that brings about salvation
- 13- He seals believers
- 13- He promises the Holy Spirit as a pledge
- 14- He redeems and possesses his own
- 14- He receives all glory.

Church

- 2- Called saints and faithful
- 2- receive grace and peace
- 2- now have a relationship with the Father and the Son
- 3-blessed with every spiritual blessing
- 3-blessed on a divine level
- 4-chosen in Christ
- 4-chosen before all things
- 4-chosen with a purpose-holiness before Christ
- 5-predestined
- 5-adopted as sons
- 5-received kindness because of his desires, not ours
- 5-our right response is praise
- 6-shown grace (7-riches of grace, 8-lavished on us)
- 7-redeemed and forgiven of trespasses
- 7-saved from wrath of God because of Jesus lifeblood
- 9-received revelation of his gospel
- 10- our salvation was purposeful
- 11-recipients of an predestined, purposeful inheritance
- 11-all things in our life are after the counsel of His will
- 12-We now have hope in Christ
- 12-we now rightly praise God
- 13- we heard and received and believed the message of truth
- 13- we have been saved
- 13- sealed as promised with the Spirit
- 14- have been given a pledge
- 14- have in view our future redemption,
- 14- we are instruments of God's praise!

DISCUSSION:

1. How do we process the depths of these truths?
2. How does a wrong view of our salvation effect our thankfulness and our view of God?
3. If someone asked you, what would you tell them about your blessings in salvation?