

Ephesians

Week Two: Every Spiritual Blessing For the Praise of His Glorious Grace

Problem & Solution: (for leaders)

**We take our salvation, and all the blessings that come along with it, for granted. We fail to recognize that these blessings weren't merely given to us for our enjoyment, but to bring God glory. – The main actor of this story is God – he has rescued us so that His glory can be seen in our lives. We have been given “every spiritual blessing” in Christ that we might live to “the praise of his glory.”*

Introduction:

*Imagine that you just found out that you would have no electricity for the next three days. What would your life be like? What things would you not be able to do or enjoy? What other things do you take for granted in your life? What would it be like to lose them?

The Biblical Text: Ephesians 1:3-14

Every Spiritual Blessing (v.3-14):

*List: what are the spiritual blessings given to us by God according to this passage?

*Think back to grade-school when you picked teams for gym class. How did it feel to be picked early? Late? How does that inform what it means that we were chosen by God before the foundation of the world?

*In light of the statement in v. 5 that we are adopted by God, what difference does it make in relating to someone as a member of their family versus being an outsider?

*Paul uses the phrase “in Him” and “in Christ” a number of times in this passage. Take a moment to list and think about each one (*blessed in Christ, vs 3, chose us in Him, vs 4, adopted us through Jesus Christ, vs 5, etc*). What do you think Paul is trying to communicate by doing this?

*What motivated God to give us these blessings? (*His pleasure and will, vs 5; to the praise of the glory of His grace, vs 6, etc.*) What did we do to earn these blessings? (*Nothing*)

*The Spirit is said to be the down payment or guarantee of our inheritance (v.14). What does this mean? What does this say about the importance of the presence of the Spirit in our lives? What does it mean that we've been sealed by him?

Conclusion:

*What one purpose continually resurfaces as the reason for everything God does in this passage? (*for his glory, to the praise of his glory, to the praise of his glorious grace--all pointing to Him, His glory!*)

*In looking at all that God has done for us, which of these spiritual blessings do you most often take for granted? Why?

*What do you think it is about your heart that causes you to resist acknowledging what God has done for you?

* If appropriate for your group, you might take some time to pray and thank and praise God for what is declared in this passage. This text is, after all, a recorded prayer of praise!

G o i n g D e e p e r

Additional Discussion Questions:

*How does Paul describe the way God forgives? (*Showed his kindness on us, he purchased our freedom, he was not reluctant to forgive.*) How does this line up with your view of God's forgiveness?

*How would you know that your appreciation for the things God has done in these verse is growing? What would be the indicators? What would be true of your life?

*How does seeing all that God has given to us reflect how incredible He is?

*The Holy Spirit is God's pledge, a seal, and the promise of our inheritance. In what ways have you benefited from the Spirit's ministry and direction? How has He (the Holy Spirit) encouraged and strengthened your faith in Christ?

Past, Present and Future: An Outline of Ephesians 1:3-14

*John MacArthur makes an excellent observation about the structure of the passage:

Verses	v.3-6	v.7-11	v.12-14
Time	Past Before the foundation...	Present We have...	Future Until we acquire it...
Primary Actor	Father	Son	Spirit
Reason	To the praise of his glorious grace	According to his purpose	To the praise of his glory
Key Themes	Chosen, adopted	Redeemed, bought	Sealed, given an inheritance

*How do these structural notes help you understand the plan of salvation laid out in v.3-14? Do you see its scope? Its comprehensiveness?

How do other's teach this text?

*Check John Piper's sermon on this text by going here: www.desiringgod.org. Go to the resource library, search by Scripture and look up Ephesians 1. Actually you can do this for every weeks text, as Dr. Piper has taught through the entire book!

Umm... Predestined?

So everyone in your study is going to want to talk about predestination here, which is fine, it's just not the most important thing. It can also be a bit contentious. But if you want some solid resources on the issue, check this link for a basic introduction: www.challies.com/archives/articles/an-introduction.php