

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 16TH, 2022 // BOOK OF EPHESIANS

## AUTHORSHIP

The Apostle Paul identifies himself twice throughout the letter as the author (1:1; 3:1).

- Paul was Jewish-born in Tarsus. We see him referred to as Saul, his Jewish name, and as Roman citizen, Paul. Being a Jewish Roman citizen afforded Paul an opportunity to minister to both Jews and Gentiles.

## PAUL'S CONVERSION

Paul was a Pharisee, a highly educated Jewish leader. As a religious leader, Paul viewed Jesus and His teachings as blasphemous and was zealous in his persecution of early Christ followers.

- On the road to Damascus, Paul met the resurrected Jesus and was dramatically converted in 35 A.D.

## CENTER FOR THE WORSHIP OF FALSE GODS

Acts 20-21 tells us about Paul's entry into the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was a huge capital city—with a population of 300,000—in the Roman province of Asia.

- The great city was a center for the worship of Greek and Roman gods. Ephesus was home to the Temple of Diana, one of the wonders of the ancient world.

## EFFECTIVE MINISTRY IN EPHESUS

Paul worked for two years to spread the gospel in Ephesus and was quite effective in bringing people to Jesus.

- However, Paul's work and teaching disrupted the Pax Romana, which is the peace of Rome, and he was eventually arrested and imprisoned under Nero's reign in 67 A.D. He was killed a year later.

## THE CROWN OF PAUL'S WRITING

5-10 years after his missionary journey to Ephesus, while imprisoned in Rome, Paul penned this letter to the believers in Ephesus.

- Unlike most of Paul's letters, this one was not written to address problems, but to discuss spiritual blessings in Christ and the necessity of living a life that reflects those blessings.

## SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (EPHESIANS 1:1-14) TO THE SAINTS IN EPHESUS AND TO US

Paul addresses his letter to the "faithful saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus." The "saints" refers to those who are set apart for God.

- Though this was addressed to those saints in Ephesus, the truths about God's grace being communicated by Paul are still applicable to all "saints" regardless of time and location.

## BLESSED IS THE GOD WHO BLESSES US

When the text communicates that God is blessed, this means that God is to be praised and spoken of in high regard because of the **spiritual blessings** He has given us in Christ.

- **These blessings, in the heavens, are not found anywhere else but in Jesus.** They are higher, infinitely better, and more secure than any earthly blessing.

## "FOR HE CHOSE US IN HIM"

God has chosen us, **before the foundation of the world**, to be holy and blameless in love before Him.

- This means we were chosen to be recipients of God's great love and mercy **before we had done anything to earn it or had been anything to deserve it** (Romans 5:8).

## WE ARE TO PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The principle of being chosen to be blameless and holy in His sight does not mean perfection.

- Jesus alone is sinless and perfect, and we are viewed as holy and perfect in God's sight because of Jesus. **We are clothed in His righteousness before God** (2 Corinthians 5:21).

## THOUGH CHOSEN, WE MUST CHOOSE TOO

Being chosen does not remove the personal responsibility to trust, to hear the Word of truth, and to believe.

- **Any understanding of God's sovereignty in choosing us that diminishes our personal responsibility for holiness and sanctification misses the whole counsel of God.**

## WE ARE GRAFTED IN AS CO-HEIRS

We are fully adopted into the family of God. In adoption, a child is brought into the family and given the same rights as a child born into that family.

- The family of God was once reserved exclusively for the Jewish people, but **through Jesus, we are adopted into the family of God and become co-heirs with Christ** (Romans 8:17).

## BLESSINGS THROUGH THE SON

We receive **redemption and forgiveness** through the blood of Christ. God **enlightens and enriches** us through the Son.

- God **revealed His great plan to redeem us** through Jesus, and **through His blood, we have been purchased and set free at a price. We now have value because of Jesus.**

## BLESSINGS THROUGH THE SPIRIT

God seals us with the promised Holy Spirit when we hear the word of truth and believe it. Being sealed is a mark of ownership and a guarantee of our inheritance. It signifies authority, authenticity, and security.

- **Being sealed by the Holy Spirit should not be reduced to an emotional feeling or some mysterious inward experience.**

## SPIRITUAL INSIGHT (EPHESIANS 1:15-23) PAUL'S PRAYER FOR US

Paul knows the complexity and magnitude of these truths are beyond our ability to fully understand or appreciate, so he wisely prays that the Spirit would enlighten us.

- He prays we would have wisdom, which is the application of knowledge, and revelation, experiencing who God is and His truth.

## OUR HOPE

Paul wants us to know by experience the hope we have in Jesus. We have assurance that God is faithful and true.

- Our hope is not built on well wishes or warm sentiments; our hope is built on the promises which are ours in Christ. **They are ours to take hold of, to stand on, and to trust in.**

## OUR RICHES

Paul wants us to know by experience the riches offered to us in Christ. The present spiritual riches offered to us through Christ as well as our inheritance of heavenly riches.

- As great as these blessings are, and as great as salvation and transformation is, **the greatest blessing is a relationship with the Father.**

## GOD'S POWER

Paul wants us to know by experience the great power of God available to us through Jesus. The power of God to resurrect Christ from the dead and place Him above all is now in us.

- **The cross was a picture of the depths of God's love and the resurrection was a picture of the depths of His great power.**

## SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

- **God offers us a new heart**, which is far better than any new possession we can acquire on earth.
- **We can be full of the Spirit**, which is more filling and satisfying than having our stomachs full of the best food this world can offer.
- To be **an heir of God** is better than being an heir to all the riches of this world.

## INVENTORY

- **Immense wealth is available to us, but we choose to live in spiritual poverty.**
- We are to be clothed in Christ. **What do people see when they look at us?**
- V.10 says God's plan is "to bring everything together in Christ." **Why do we believe we can separate our Christian life from our worldly life?**
- God has accepted us! **We do not make ourselves acceptable to God, but by His grace we are made acceptable in Christ.**
- We must **seek to understand the significance and magnitude of the blessings offered to us** through Christ, then **seek the ability to live accordingly.**