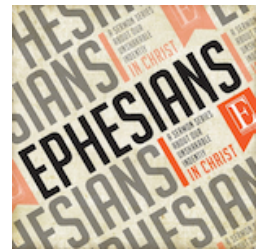


COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION - 4.23-24.13

"EPHESIANS: BLESSED" - EKKLESIA



SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 1:3-14 ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 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, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

BIG IDEA

We oftentimes assume that God doesn't want to bless us, or, if he does, that we have to pay him back. But God is good; we don't have to make him bless us. In the longest sentence in the entire Bible, Paul says that those in Christ are blessed with election, holiness, predestination, adoption, redemption, forgiveness, grace, and the Holy Spirit's seal—all to the praise of God's glory. In response to these spiritual blessings, we praise the God who blesses us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q.1 Was there anything from *Sunday's Sermon* or the *Big Idea* that had an affect on you? Did you hear anything that raised more questions in your mind?

Q.2 What stands out to you in **Ephesians 1:3-14** and why? Which *blessings* in Christ would you like to talk about or discuss?

**Election, Holiness, Predestination, Adoption, Redemption, Forgiveness, Grace, an Inheritance, and the Holy Spirit's seal.*

Q.3 How does the world typically view God's *blessings*? In our culture, what is the typical belief about how to be *blessed by God, the universe, etc.*? How is that different from what Paul says in Ephesians 1:3?

Q.4 How do you see God's plan of election and predestination concerning your own story? *Where was your life* before Jesus saved you or *where do you think your life would be* had Jesus not saved you?

Q.5 How does knowing that you were *chosen before the foundation of the world* give you great assurance and joy in Christ?

GOOD WORD

If you ever doubt your purpose; if you ever despair because of your sins or because of the sins that have been committed against you, hear this: in Christ God has been shouting over you since before the foundation of the world, "You are mine! Before the earth existed I have been loving you, and I will never stop." Joy to us and glory to Jesus! Amen.