

EPHESIANS

The Gospel shines through Ephesians from start to finish. Like a tree, the letter starts with strong roots beneath the surface, which allows for fruitful living. In a broad sense, the first half of Ephesians says, "This is who you are, *by grace*" and the second half says, "This is how you should live, *by grace*."



WHEN YOU MEET:

Week starting Monday 24 February

Connect:

Spend some time greeting and welcoming each other.

Pause & Pray:

Take a few minutes to pause and clear your mind, letting go of what may be filling your heart and mind. Share with God what's going on for you at this moment. Allow Him to remind you that you are at home in Him and His immense love for you. He doesn't need anything else from you right now - just your stillness. Pray, asking God to speak to each person through the time together as we reflect on God's word.

Read & re-read the passage: Ephesians 1:1-14

Summary:

How quickly we forget what is ours when we become followers of Jesus. Paul delights in reminding the believers at Ephesus about the spiritual blessings that were theirs because they belonged to Christ. But these blessings were not for them as individuals. Nor are they for us alone. They belong to the Church. Our tendency is to proclaim individual salvation without moving on to the saved community.

Note the statement, "he chose us in him." God put us and Christ together in his mind. He determined to make us (who did not yet exist) his own children through the redeeming work of Christ (which had not yet taken place). It was a definite decision. It also arose from his entirely unmerited favour. When he chose us, we were unholy and blameworthy and therefore deserving not of adoption but of judgment. Further, he made us his children.

Questions:

1. How does being a part of a Christian community help you to see God at work?
2. Read Ephesians 1:1-10. What information does the introduction to this book give (v. 1-2)?
3. How are you affected by the fact that God had a plan for you before the world was created?

EPHESIANS



Questions:

4. Read Ephesians 1:11-14. In these verses, it seems that Paul is alluding to the church as God's 'inheritance' and 'possession'. These words used to be applied exclusively to the one nation of Israel but are now reapplied to an international people whose common factor is that they are all 'in Christ'. The fact that the same vocabulary is used of both peoples indicates the spiritual continuity between them. How did we become God's possession (vv. 5,9,11-12)?
5. How does it feel to think of yourself as God's inheritance and possession? Notice the repeated phrase, "to the praise of his glory" in verses 5-6, 12, and 14. What does this tell you about why God created us?
6. How is your life affected by all the spiritual blessings you have received in Christ Jesus?
7. How can you influence your Christian community to live for God's glory?

Pray:

In silence, reflect on all that we have in Christ Jesus.

Praise God for each and all of the spiritual blessings he has given to you, past, present, and future.

Ask the Holy Spirit to make them a reality in your life.

MORE RESOURCES:

- Discipleship Resources Hub: grlc.org.au/discipleship-resources/
- Latest sermon: <https://grlc.org.au/grlc-hub/>

