

SERMON OUTLINE

Ephesians 1:1-2 Paul begins his letter with 3 elements common to 1st century letters.

- I. The letter's author is identified: Paul.
 - A. An apostle of Christ Jesus (v. 1a).
 - B. By the will of God (v. 1b).
- II. The letter's recipients are identified: Saints.
 - A. Who are in Ephesus (v. 1c).
 - B. Who are faithful in Christ Jesus (v. 1d).
- III. The letter's greeting is given.
 - A. Grace from God the Father & God the Son (v. 2a, c).
 - B. Peace from God the Father & God the Son (v. 2b, c).

In Ephesians 1:3-14 we are shown 2 aspects of our spiritual blessings.

- I. Our spiritual blessings have specific qualities.
 - A. They are given by God, who should be blessed (v. 3a).
 - B. They are given to those in union with Christ (v. 3b).
 - C. They are complete (v. 3c).
 - D. They are in the spiritual realm (v. 3d).

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, January 22, 2017 **Passage: Ephesians 1:1-3**

Memory Passage: Ephesians 1:3-6 (we will memorize Ephesians 1 over the next few weeks)

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Acts 19:1-41.** Acts 19 describes Paul's time in Ephesus on his 3rd missionary journey. Explain each of the 3 vignettes described in this chapter and the most important implications of each one.

(b) What is the difference between John's baptism and Jesus' baptism (vs. 1-7)?

(c) What is the connection between the testimony of the evil spirit (v. 15), the fear of the people (v. 17), and the actions of the people (vs. 18-20)?

(d) What did you learn about Paul in this chapter? What did you learn about Ephesus in this chapter?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:1-6:24.** Briefly describe the content of Ephesians' 2 main sections (chapters 1-3 & 4-6).

(b) What is the most noticeable difference between the 2 sections (hint: note the number of commands in each section)?

(c) Explain the importance of "therefore" in 4:1.

(d) What do you learn that provides background for helping decide when & from where Paul wrote this letter?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:1-3.** What do the 2 prepositional phrases tell you about the nature of Paul's apostleship (v. 1)?

(b) Explain each of the 4 things you learn about the recipients of Paul's letter (v. 1b).

(c) What makes a person a "saint?" Is it a title conferred? A status earned? If not, then how does one become a saint?

(d) If Paul were writing to the members of the Bible Church of Cabot, how do you think he would describe us and why?

**DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT
PASSAGE**

READ THE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:1-14.** What is your own experience with your earthly father? How does this experience affect your view of God as your Father? In what ways might a person's relationship with their earthly father hinder their ability to accept God as a Father of Blessing? How might you help people see God as a different kind of Father than they have experienced?

(b) What does Paul mean when he says, "Blessed be . . . God" in v. 1?

(c) How is one to receive the blessings that God the Father provides (find the answer in v. 3)?

(d) During the next several weeks we will study the blessings promised to those in Christ, but for now, list every blessing found in vs. 3-14 that Paul says we have received.

**DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT
PASSAGE**

READ THE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:1-14.** Return to the list of spiritual blessings you made yesterday. Take a moment to write a brief definition of each one. With which ones are you most familiar? Of which ones do you need to grow in understanding?

(b) Verse 3 mentions that the spiritual blessings received by those who are in Christ are found "in the heavenly places." What does this phrase mean, and why is it important to us?

(c) Notice that Paul says God "has blessed us" (past tense). In what ways should this bring you encouragement? In what ways should this challenge your current content of prayer? How should this affect the way you disciple other believers?

(d) End today be re-reading the entire letter of Ephesians and writing down (1) any questions you have, (2) which part(s) of the letter you are most excited to study more in-depth and why, (3) which parts of the letter you are most hesitant to study and why.

DATE: January 22, 2017

PASSAGE: Ephesians 1:1-3

Blessed by the Blessed One!