



Northland Christian Church

• PRAISE THE FATHER • EPHESIANS 1:3-14 • 11/1/2020

MAIN POINT

God is worthy of all of our praise, worship, and devotion because of His love for us - demonstrated by His choosing, adopting, redeeming, and forgiving us in Christ.

Here are the 3 Blessings we discussed last week from Ephesians 1:3-6.

- Blessing #1 The Father Choose Us
- Blessing #2 The Father Predestined Us for Adoption
- Blessing #3 The Father Freely Gives Grace

Here are the 4 Blessings we will think about from Ephesians 1:7-12.

- Blessing #4 The Father Redeems Us
 - Blessing #5 The Father Reveals the Mystery to Us (vs. 8 - 10)
 - Blessing #6 The Father Builds a Heritage of Hope Through Us (vs. 11-12)
 - Blessing #7 The Father Seals Us with the Spirit (vs. 13-14)
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INTRODUCTION AND CONNECTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Do you know anyone who has adopted a child or was adopted as a child? What is the most interesting part of their story?

When a family adopts a child, how is the child blessed? How are the parents blessed?

When a person becomes a Christian, God holds nothing back from them. As His adopted sons and daughters, we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. These blessings flow from God's grace, wisdom, and eternal purpose, and behind each of these blessings is God's desire that our lives glorify Him.

ENGAGING AND UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WORD

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 1:3-14.

What motivated God to "adopt" us in Christ (vv. 3-4)? What is God's eternal plan for you, according to these verses?

Spiritual blessings are those blessings that pertain to the life of the Spirit, those benefits from God that enable us to experience salvation and to live as His children to the praise of His glorious grace (v. 6). Our ability to be holy is made possible by God's grace and as a part of His eternal plan, God has blessed us by choosing us for holy living and adopting us as His children.

How should our lives reflect God's grace when we are living a holy life? How should it reflect hope?

Did God make us His holy ones merely for our happiness or for our enjoyment of material blessings on earth and spiritual blessings in heaven? No, God made us holy people so we might praise Him for doing just that. Believers exist to bring glory to God.

What does verse 6 say is the goal of God's work in our lives? How should this purpose shape your lifelong spiritual purpose and pursuits?

God's motive in adopting us as His sons through Christ is love. He did not do this merely for our personal happiness, but for His glory (v. 6). Even this is an act of love because God is the most glorious being in the universe. Psalm 16:11 says that in God's presence, "there is fullness of joy." By adopting us for His own glory, God opens our eyes to see that we were made to worship Him and find joy in His presence.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 1:7-14.

Not only has God chosen and predestined His people, He has redeemed them. Paul asserted that redemption is available in Him—meaning in Christ Jesus—and is accomplished through His blood.

What does the fact that we need redemption tell us about ourselves?

Why is it important to remember that our right standing with God was achieved by God's "own purpose and grace"? How might your relationship with God be different if your salvation were based upon your good works instead?

Paul makes clear in Ephesians 1 that God redeemed us and forgave our sins "according to the riches of His grace" in Christ (v. 7). No one can boast before God because salvation in Christ is His gift (Eph. 2:8-9).

How does your redemption bring God glory?

According to these verses, what is our inheritance through Christ? What aspect of this inheritance is most exciting for you and why?

In the case of the believer's redemption, the price paid was the blood of Jesus (1 Pet. 1:18-19)—referring to His sacrificial death. If you are a Christian, understand that God has redeemed you to provide Himself an inheritance. This is part of what He has planned to accomplish through Jesus Christ.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How does knowing that you are the inheritance of God speak to your value and self worth?

How can reflecting on your inheritance in Christ change the way you view material things in your life right now?

Is there anything making you afraid of the future right now? How can reflecting on your redemption and inheritance in Christ make you confident in the future?

PRAYER

Thank God for choosing us, adopting us, redeeming us, and forgiving us in Christ. Pray that the members of your group would taste and see the matchless love of God displayed in the gospel. Pray that the love of God in the gospel would shape our love for each other—here at our church and beyond.

BACKGROUND COMMENTARY

EPHESIANS 1:6-14.

1:6-8. Paul moved from the benefits we receive through God's plan of salvation to the benefit God receives: the praise of His glorious grace. When we realize how magnificently God has displayed His grace, we can't help but praise Him. Our inclusion in God's gracious plan (He favored us) occurs only in living union with Christ (in the Beloved), God's Son. Because of His grace, the Father's love for His Son Jesus has overflowed toward us ("in love," 1:4). Redemption referred to the payment of a price (ransom) in order to set slaves free. Paul taught that the death of Christ was the price paid to free sinners from their bondage to sin. The basis of redemption is the riches of His grace, God's limitless mercy. One result of redemption is forgiveness. Punishment is no longer due to we who deserve it, because Another was punished in our place. The term "lavish" means more than enough. God's rich grace toward undeserving sinners has overflowed like a mighty waterfall. Thus redemption brings to us who receive it the wisdom and understanding we need to live right.

1:9-12. God's plan is more inclusive than the salvation of individuals. He will bring everything together in the Messiah. Everything will be recognized as submitting to the authority of Jesus Christ. Nothing and no one will escape. Paul was not teaching universalism here, that every person will eventually be saved. Rather, one day every part of the universe will be renewed and brought into subjection to its true Lord. Through redemption and adoption into God's family, Christians have become His special possession.

1:13-14. In addition to all the other spiritual blessings Paul noted, he now mentioned that believers are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Each believer in Christ receives the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). His presence proves we are truly His children and under His protection. The term "down payment" referred to a portion of a sales price paid in advance to secure someone's legal claim to an item. The very Spirit of God in the lives of believers is only the beginning of what we receive in salvation. Paul looked to our future inheritance, the full enjoyment of eternity, when our redemption will be complete. Again the apostle noted the benefit to God from His wonderful plan. Throughout all eternity, salvation will result in the praise of His glory (1:6,12) and being with His people. .