



A STUDY OF EPHESIANS

BLESSED BEYOND MEASURE

Ephesians 1:3-14

Open in Prayer – As a group, begin your time together in prayer asking God to speak to you. Ask him to reveal to you in a fresh and powerful way one of the many blessings that are ours in Christ Jesus.

- Share about a time in your life when someone really blessed you. In other words, can you remember a time when someone said or did something for you that really encouraged your heart? What impact did this have on your life and how did it make you feel?

Read Ephesians 1.3-14

- From the text, what are some of the spiritual blessings that we have received from God?
- Which of these 'blessings' really jump out at you? Which of the blessings take on the most meaning for you? Why?
- Have you ever met a person who has an innate ability to see what can become of something? For example, all you might see is a bunch of broken pieces of tiles when someone else sees a beautiful mosaic. Maybe this describes you, if so, share an experience you've had in the past taking someone's discarded trash or garage sale item and then turned it into something great. If this doesn't describe you, can you think of a person who is like this and what they've done?
- In Ephesians 1.4 and 5 we are told that God "chose us before the foundation of the world" and that he "predestined" us. Why does it feel so good knowing that God chose you before the foundation of the world?
 - I don't know about you but sometimes my life feels like a bunch of broken pieces of tiles and to know that God has chosen me despite my brokenness feels pretty good. Think about it for a moment – God wants to take all your brokenness and turn it into something great. He knew from eternity past that you would never have it all together yet he still chose you. Pretty cool eh?
- What does 'election' or 'predestination' mean to you? (discuss before reading further)
 - If we think that 'election' or 'predestination' is about me and my privileged status before God we don't understand the terms – election and predestination are about God, his love and grace and it is about lifestyle.



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- Read Eph. 1.4 – What are we chosen for?
- In addition to being 'holy and blameless' what other reason did God have for choosing you?
 - Read Gen. 12.1-2 – Why did God choose Abraham? Why did God choose Israel?
 - Read Dt. 14.2
 - We were not chosen, Paul says, for our own sake but for the sake of what God wants to accomplish through us. In what ways might God want to bless others through you? Is there any place in your life right now where you can be a tangible blessing to someone else (i.e. someone outside of the church or Christian faith)?
- Count the amount of times in this chapter that Paul uses the words "in Christ" or "in him". Paul says that we live our life 'in Christ' – how aware are you on a day to day basis of the presence of God? As you go through your day does it occur to you that you are living your life 'in Christ'?
- Read Eph. 1.4 - "in love" (v.4) – in the original manuscripts there is no punctuation. In fact, verses 3-14 are one long sentence. Some scholars disagree as to where the phrase 'in love' belongs. Does it belong with verse 4 or verse 5? What difference does it make where you place it? (discuss before reading further)
 - It actually could go with either verse and still make sense – in this instance most scholars agree that it belongs with verse 4 because the majority of times that 'love' is used in Ephesians it is referring to human love.
- If taken with verse 4 – what is Paul trying to say to us about being holy and blameless? See also Philippians 1.9-10 and 1 Thess.3.12-13.
 - Maybe what Paul is trying to say to us is that being holy and blameless needs to be couched in love. Finish the following sentences:
 - Holiness without love is _____
 - Love without holiness is _____
- Paul says that God has blessed us 'lavishly' (v.8) with these gifts –does this resonate with you? How closely does 'lavishly' fit the way you understand God's attitude toward you? Explain
- What is God's big plan?(vs.9-10) How do you see the beginnings of this plan unfolding today? Where might you fit into his plan?

Application: (Dear small group leader please take some time to contextualize what we have been talking about with your own group. You know your group best so take some time on your own to think about some good application questions for you and the people you lead. Thanks and God bless!)

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