

Ephesians 1:1-14

Paul's letter to the Ephesians contains some of the most exalted words in scripture. In this first chapter, Paul opens up a window into the heavenly plans and eternal purposes of God, as he explains the amazing love and blessings that belong to believers through faith in Christ. Paul's language is overflowing with thanksgiving and praise, recognizing that these blessings are all because of God's lavish love and grace. This grace brings power and hope and a purpose beyond anything that can be imagined.

As you study these verses, begin with prayer asking God to open the "eyes of your heart" to understand God's boundless love for you and the blessings that are yours in Christ.

Ephesians 1:1-2 NAS

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Day 1

Paul's authorship and background

1. How did Paul define his calling? What authority did he claim for his ministry? 1:1 (*See also I Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1*)

Digging Deeper

What qualified Paul to be an apostle?

Acts 26:13-16

Galatians 1:11-12

FYI: Apostle "In its broadest sense, **apostle** can refer to all believers, because every believer is sent into the world as a messenger of and witness for Christ (cf Php 2:25...). But in the NT the term **apostle** is predominantly used as a specific and unique title... **apostles** not only were all called directly by Jesus but all were witnesses of His resurrection, Paul having encountered Him on the Damascus Road after His ascension. Those thirteen apostles were given direct revelation of God's Word to proclaim authoritatively, the gift of healing, and the power to cast out demons (Mt 10:1). By these signs their teaching authority was verified (cf. 2 Corinthians 12:12). In Acts 1:21-22 the **Apostle** Peter delineates the necessary qualifications of the original thirteen apostles." - preceptaustin.org

2. How did Paul describe the Ephesians? 1:1

FYI: "Saints in the New Testament refers to all believers set apart by God in Christ." - The Nelson Study Bible (1983)

"Christians are **saints**, not in the **sense that they are very pious, but because of the new relationship they have been brought into by God. It is not** because of their own doing or good works but on account of what Christ has done. They are set apart for Him and His service." - preceptaustin.org

"The book of Ephesians contains no references to any individuals there, nor any references to specific problems or situations in the Ephesian church. The Ephesian epistle thus seems clearly designed for use in any church at all, and the probability is that Paul meant it as a circular letter, to be shared with all the churches in Asia. It may even be the same as the letter to Laodicea mentioned in Colossians 4:16... Some ancient manuscripts do omit the words 'which are at Ephesus' from the salutation, but by far most of the manuscripts do contain them." - Henry Morris

3. From Acts 19:8-10, what kind of ministry did Paul have in Ephesus?

4. Where was Paul when he wrote this letter? Ephesians 3:1; 4:1; 6:20 (Many scholars believe that Paul wrote this letter around A.D. 61-62, during his imprisonment at Rome.)

- What purpose did Paul believe his imprisonment served? Ephesians 3:13 (Compare Philippians 1:14)

5. From Acts 28:16,28-31 list what you learn about Paul's imprisonment at Rome.

6. Read Acts 20:17-38.

- What do you learn about the teaching the Ephesians received? 20: 20,21,27,31
- What concern did Paul have for the believers? 20:28-31a
- What instructions did he give them? 20:28,31(Compare the instructions Paul gave Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:3-5)
- What did Paul say would keep them on course? 20: 32
- What kind of a personal example had Paul been to the Ephesians? 20:33-35
- How did the people react to Paul's departure? 20:36-38
- What would describe the relationship Paul had with the people of Ephesus?

FYI: "So far as the record goes, Paul spent almost three years in Ephesus (Acts 18:18-21; 19), longer than any other place after he started his missionary ministries. A strong church was established there, and Timothy was eventually sent there by Paul as its pastor (I Timothy 1:3)."
- Henry Morris

Applying the Word: Who has been like a Paul in your life? How did they encourage you, instruct you, warn you or set a good example for you?

Ephesians 1:2-6 NAS

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Day 2

Blessings from God

7. What did Paul wish for the Ephesian believers? 1:2 (Do you see any significance in the order - i.e. "grace and peace" instead of "peace and grace")

FYI: "The apostle knew the essential place of **grace** and **peace** from God in the life of the believer, and He knew that receiving God's grace comes *before* a walk in peace with Him." - David Guzik

"**Peace** (1515) (*eirene* from *eiro* = to join or fasten together so as to bind together that which has been broken or divided) conveys the idea of setting at one again. **Peace** therefore is that common accord and tranquility which results in the joining together again those who were separated, such as a sinner and a holy God through the blood of Christ." - preceptaustin.org

"God the Father and Jesus the Son...should not be understood as implying a biological relationship. Rather, it is a theological concept that recognized that Jesus Christ and God are both equal and eternal."

- Africa Bible Commentary

8. Underline the extent of the peace we receive.

- 2 Thessalonians 3:16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you. NIV
- Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. NIV
- Philippians 4:6-7 The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. NIV
- 2 Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. NIV

9. Underline how or why we receive God's peace.

- John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.
- John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."NASU
- Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, NASU

10. How much has God blessed us? 1:3 (Note: In the original Greek, Ephesians 1:3-14 is one long sentence. The second sentence runs from 1:15-23.)

FYI: "Here the keynote of the Epistle to the Ephesians is struck at once. The writer and his reader are 'in Christ'...sharers of His resurrection-life - and because Christ Himself is now exalted in the heavenly realm, those who are 'in Him' belong to the heavenly realm, too, in the mind of God."
- F. F. Bruce

Chosen by the Father

11. How were we chosen? 1:4a

- When were we chosen? 1:4b
- To what end were we chosen? 1:4c (Cf. 5:27, See also Colossians 1:22,28)
- What was the motive for God's choice? 1:4d

Digging Deeper

How could God choose us (1:4) before we existed?
Psalm 139:4,13,16

FYI: "God's eternal choice is warm and smiling... Again the ground of His choice is His love and good pleasure, not man's or woman's goodness...It is a doctrine which lets God be God. It also forms a bedrock of confidence for the believer. A God who chose you before time, when only He existed, will not leave you victim to the time and tides of life."
- R. Kent Hughes (24)

"What is the motive behind it all? Nothing but His matchless love, a love that Eph. 3:19 declares to be 'surpassing', one that 'passeth knowledge.' It is a veritable ocean without bounds that leaves us wondering with amazement... Super-abounding love and good pleasure are the only reasons for choosing and willing that we should have such an exalted destiny."
- Stuart Allen (24,25)

12. Underline how can we be "holy and blameless" (1:4b)?

- Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- Philippians 3:9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, NASU
- Jude 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

13. For what did God predestine us? 1:5

- How did He make that possible? 1:5b (See also Galatians 3:26) (*In Ephesians 1:2-13,20 circle the phrases “in Christ, in Him, through Christ, in the Beloved.”*)
- What was this “according to”? 1:5c (Cp. I John 3:1a)

FYI: Predestined (1:5) “*Foreknowledge* [see Romans 8:29] reveals the wondrous capacity of an omnipotent God Who knows all things before they come to pass and therefore is not limited in any way in His planning for the future...By grace we have been chosen by the Father...We can be certain of one thing, namely that we were not selected because of any goodness or merit on our part., Nothing but His ‘will’ and the greatness of His love and grace come in here and this took place before creation and the ages of times.” - Stuart Allen (23)

“The underlying motive for God’s choice and predestination is love (1:4d), which does not exclude anyone (John 3:16). Those excluded in the end are those who refuse God’s offer of salvation (John 3:17-19).” - Africa Bible Commentary (1427)

14. How did Paul respond to all of these blessings in Christ? 1:6a

- How was the grace given? 1:6b (Try writing vs. 6 in your own words?)

IT’S GREEK TO ME: “**grace**” – Strong’s #5485 “*charis*: graciousness, good will, loving-kindness, favour”

“**freely bestowed/freely given/ made us accepted**” – Strong’s #5487 “*charitoos*: to grace; to pursue with grace, compass with favor, honor with blessings”

“Jesus was completely accepted by the Father. All His character, all His words, all His work was acceptable to God the Father. And now we are **accepted in the Beloved...**” - David Guzik

“Paul has let himself go, throwing his heart into grand jubilation over the greatness of salvation. Clause tumbles after clause in his grand power of praise.” - R. Kent Hughes (27)

to the praise of His glorious grace “God want to be praised by the children He has adopted. It is their bliss which He seeks...His joy and pleasure in doing good is only fulfilled when they show themselves utterly pleased. The praise God’s people are to give is the enthusiastic applause and cheers of captives who have been given freedom” - Ephesians, Mastering the Basics (19)

Applying the Word: *What difference does it make to know that you are not only loved by God but totally accepted and planned for from “before the foundation of the world”?*

Ephesians 1:7-12 NAS

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 on us. In all wisdom and insight*

9 *He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him*

11 *also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,*

12 *to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.*

Day 3

Redeemed by the Son

15. What blessings did Christ's death bring? 1:7

IT'S GREEK TO ME: **Redemption** *apolutrosis* NT:629, lit., "a releasing, for (i. e., on payment of) a ransom."
- Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

Redemption "the word implies that our former existence was one of slavery from which we required to be ransomed."
- F. F. Bruce

"This redemption was costly to God, utterly beyond our assessment, yet to us it is free, without money and without price. It's accomplishment was by the life-blood of our Savior, poured out on our behalf on Calvary's cross."
- Stuart Allen (27)

16. What did Jesus say was the payment for sins? Matthew 20:28

17. In the following verses, underline what God has redeemed/rescued people from?

- Psalm 130:8 He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins. NIV
- Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." NIV
- Colossians 1:13-14 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. NASU
- Titus 2:14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. NIV
- 1 Peter 1:18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, NIV

18. Read the following verses and underline the phrases that describe God's forgiveness/mercy and what happens to our sins because of Christ redemption.

- Psalm 103:10-12 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. NAS
- Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow.... NAS
- Isaiah 38:17 Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back. NIV
- Isaiah 43:25 "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins. NAS
- Isaiah 44:22 I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you." NIV
- Jeremiah 31:34 "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."
- Micah 7:19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. NIV
- Romans 4:6-8 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him." NIV
- Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, NIV

19. What is our redemption and forgiveness "according to?" 1:7,8a (Cf. 2:8,9) (Mark the word "grace" in 1:1,6,7 and in the rest of Ephesians.)

IT'S GREEK TO ME: lavished/made abound (1:8) – Strong's #4052 "*perisseuo*; to superabound (in quantity or quality), be in excess, be superfluous"

riches of His grace. "When God gives 'according to the riches of His grace' He gives from his unlimited treasure-house. Grace is unmerited favor - 'an overflowing abundance of unmerited love, inexhaustible in God and freely accessible through Christ,' say Charles Hodge...We are eternal objects of His divine favor in accordance with His riches which He lavished on us and will continue to lavish!...we are wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice, for God gives not *from* the riches of His grace, but *according* to the riches of His grace. We are going to be lavished with favor for eternity."
- R. Kent Hughes (34,35)

20. What did God reveal to us? 1:9 What was this "according to"?

FYI: "The *mystery* is not a puzzle to solve, or knowledge only for the few and the initiated, as in the mystery religions of Paul's day. In Paul's use, the word *mystery* refers to an aspect of God's will that was once hidden or obscure, but now was being revealed by God."
- The Nelson Study Bible (1983)

21. What does this mystery reveal about God's plan ("dispensation/administration") for heaven and earth? 1: 10 (Compare Colossians 1:15-18)

FYI: "It is God's purpose that the whole of His restored creation from the highest heavens to the lowest earth shall finally stand in the headship and almighty power of the Lord Jesus...This will be God's guarantee that the tragedy of sin and death can never be repeated, for never again will creation stand in the strength of a created being. This is the mighty goal to which God is working."
- Stuart Allen (29)

22. What else have we received through Christ? 1:11a (See Romans 8:17)

- How confident can we be about what God has planned for us? 1:11b (See also Isaiah 46:9-11)

FYI: Inheritance (1:11) "We are assured by Paul that 'in Him we have obtained an **inheritance**'. The Revised Version reads 'in Whom also we were made a heritage'. Both these translations are true...We *have* a heavenly inheritance (Phil. 3:20) and at the same time we *are* the inheritance of Christ...The glory and wonder of this inheritance cannot be measured in earthly experience or understanding...God has made no attempt to describe it, for had He done so it would have been beyond our comprehension... All around us we see the wreckage that man's sin and failure have brought. Trouble, uncertainty and distress are everywhere, but this divine plan goes forward silently and with absolute certainty. Nothing can frustrate it, for Christ's risen power lies behind it all."
- Stuart Allen (29.30)

23. What part will believers have in God's eternal plan in Christ? 1:12

FYI: we who were the first to hope "If *hemeis* (we) here refers to the Jewish Christians, as most scholars prefer to take it, then *pro* (first) would suggest 'before the Gentiles'...If the *hemeis* are the Christians as a whole...then *pro* looks forward to the fulfillment of the hope in the future."
- Stuart Allen (31)

"**Glor**y (*doxa*) means to give a proper opinion or estimate of. ...In other words, believers (in this case 'we who were the first to hope') are trophies of the grace of God, exhibiting what He can do with such unlikely raw materials, and thus bringing glory to Him."
- preceptaustin.org

Applying the Word: *In the light of these verses, where do you think your view of God's love and grace towards you needs to be expanded?*

Ephesians 1:13-14 NAS

13 *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation -- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,*

14 *who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*

Day 4

Sealed by the Holy Spirit

24. List the steps of faith that had occurred in the lives of the Ephesian believers. 1:13
(Mark the word *Holy Spirit* and its pronouns in 1:13-14.)

- Who is the “you” in 1:13? (See 2:11,12)

IT'S GREEK TO ME: “**sealed/marked**” (1:13) – Strong’s #4972 “*sphragizo*; to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation”

“The ‘seal’ (*sphragis*) was affixed to a document to guarantee its genuineness. It was attached to goods in transit to indicate ownership and ensure protection.”
- Expositor’s Bible Commentary

“This divine sealing...assures us that this aspect of God’s purpose, like a legal document, is signed, sealed and settled, and can never be frustrated or reversed... God’s seal cannot be broken. We are sealed *unto the day of redemption*, and that day will surely be reached.”
- Stuart Allen (32)

25. What does the Holy Spirit guarantee/pledge? 1:14 (See also 2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

- How is the Holy Spirit described in Romans 8:23?

IT'S GREEK TO ME: **pledge/deposit** (1:145) Strong’s #728 “*arrhobon*; a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest”

“The word is borrowed from the commercial world and means a deposit or first installment... It is a token payment assuring the vendor that the full amount will eventually follow. ..Paul regards the Holy Spirit as the first installment of the Christian’s inheritance. At the end of the age God will redeem his pledge and open the treasuries of heaven to all who are his in Christ.”
- Expositor’s Bible Commentary

[The Holy Spirit] is our only down payment of coming glory; nothing else is provided - or needed.” - David Guzik

“Imagine the...most treasured experiences of the Holy Spirit we have ever had and then realize they are only a foretaste...of what is to come. Remember the release in coming to Christ and knowing you were forgiven? Remember that time when in worship you were smitten with awe? Remember the time you followed the Spirit’s leading and were wonderfully used? Remember the satisfaction of finding the fruits of the Spirit surprising you with goodness where you once responded wickedly? Think of all this and then multiply it a millionfold. Here on earth we have experienced the first dollar of a million celestial dollars — the earnest. We have the dawning of knowledge, but then we will have the midday sun. ‘No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him’ — but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:9, 10).” - Allen (46)

26. In the following verses underline the functions/blessings/aid that comes to us through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Circle the titles or descriptions of the Spirit.

- John 14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth. KJV
- John 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, NASU
- John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. NIV
- Romans 8:11. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. NIV
- Romans 8:15-16 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. NIV
- Romans 8:26 And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words
- Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. NIV
- 1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,
- Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- 2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
- Ephesians 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;

27. What is a believer called in 1:14? What does 1 Corinthians 6:19,20. say about the change and the responsibility that comes with the Holy Spirit's presence? (See also Galatians 2:20)

28. How did Paul respond to the work of the Holy Spirit? 1:14b (Mark the word "praise" in 1:6,12,14.)

Applying the Word: What blessing(s) in Christ in verses 3-12 do you have trouble accepting as something that belongs to you or identifies you? How do you think you can claim this truth for living? What difference would it make in your life?