

EPHESIANS 1:3-10

GETTING STARTED...

Some passages of the Bible are easy to understand. Some are not. This passage certainly falls into the latter category. And while theologians have puzzled over this text for the past two thousand years, God did not inspire this to be written simply so that we could have a lively debate. Rather this was written for the sole purpose of worship. Paul in this passage is worshipping God for his work in eternity past, in the present, and in eternity future. Paul is looking at the grand scope of God's work with creation and exploding in praise and worship. As we study a tricky passage, the temptation can be to spend our time in debate. And while we want to be good students of the Bible and seek to understand it carefully, let us never lose sight of its purpose. It is all for the praise of His glory!

READ THE TEXT: EPHESIANS 1:3-10

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 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 upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

1. Paul uses "He" and "Him" a number of times throughout this passage. Who is he referring to with each of those? How does this passage show us the working of the Trinity? What does the Father do? What does Jesus do?
2. What are the "spiritual blessings" that Paul is referring to? Count up all the blessings that are mentioned in this passage.

REFLECTING ON THE SERMON

3. What was the main point of the sermon?
4. What has God been impressing on your heart from the sermon?

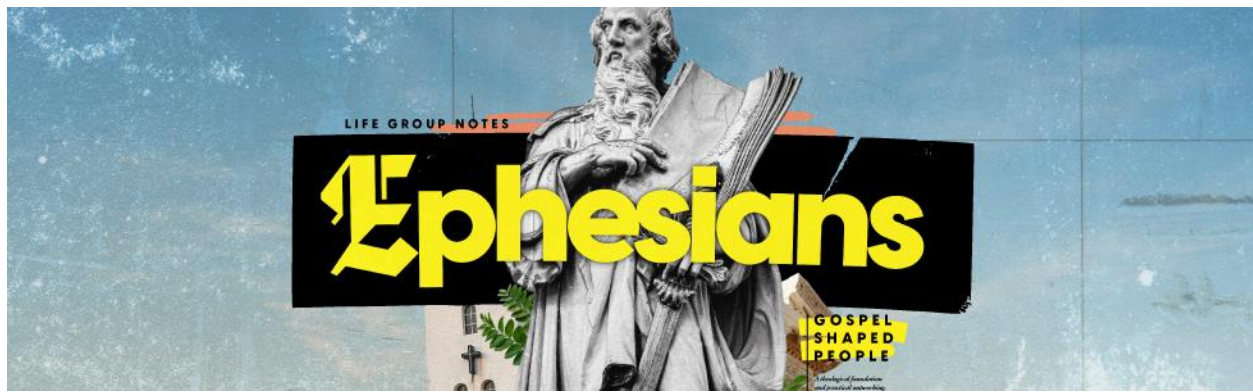
APPLYING THE POINT

5. How do we put this into practice?

- Agassiz* Are God's sovereignty and man's responsibility contradictory or compatible? How have you personally experienced the blessing of being *in Christ*? How is God asking you to respond to the blessings of predestination and redemption (*Share Christ, Confidence in Christ, Believe Christ, Praise Christ*)?
- Chilliwack* Is your life marked by praise? Read verse 3 of our text, Romans 1:24-25, and Philippians 4:8 and discuss what you praise (what do you adore? where is your affection directed most?); and why (in light of verses 3-10), more than anything, our lives should be marked by praise to God.
- Harrison/Lake Errock* Which theological doctrine in this sermon most causes your heart to overflow with praise for God's work on the behalf of His children? (Election, predestination, adoption, redemption, reconciliation). Why?
- Promontory* What aspect of salvation do you find it is hardest to praise God for? What is the easiest? How does knowing the purpose for which God created the world (His glory), help us live out our day-to-day life? Put that into practical steps.

PRAYING & SHARING

1. How can you share what you have learned with... another believer?
An unbeliever?
2. Share and pray for one another in your life group. How can you specifically pray for and encourage one another in response to this text?



How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to help facilitate Central Life Groups as they meet to understand the Bible passage, discuss the sermon, and how to put it into practice in our lives. What is contained in this guide is not an exhaustive text analysis nor a full list of questions that can or should be asked during Life Group. This is simply a guide to help **start conversations that are centered on the Word of God.**

The Life Group Guide is separated into three main sections that are arranged with an intentional order: *Understanding the Word*, *Reflecting on the Sermon*, and *Applying the Point*. We want to first understand the Word of God, and then check that understanding by what has been preached, and then discuss how to put it into practice in our own lives. The order is intended to imitate the process of how the Word of God makes changes in our lives. Head, heart, hands, and all of it wrapped in prayer.

While the meaning of a text doesn't change, the way that we are called to apply it may look different from campus to campus, and even person to person. To reflect this distinction, you will see application questions from each campus in this guide.

Start with the question(s) from your campus and then look at others to see if they are helpful for your group. You may be surprised how similar or different they end up being and how the diversity brings a fuller understanding to how we can apply the Word of God.

Our goal is not that you answer every question in this guide, but that you are able to discuss the Word of God in a way **that helps everyone follow Jesus together!**

*“Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight in them.” - Psalm 111:2*