

# Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

## Ephesians 1:1-14

### Lesson 1

Did you know that God has a will? Are you in it? In this week's lesson we will take a look at the Benefactor of the will and its beneficiaries, along with the wonderful assurance that the Benefactor has given us a Deposit to guarantee our inheritance. May your study of these first fourteen verses of Paul's letter to the Ephesians stir in you a new and deeper excitement for the inheritance that has been set aside for you.

#### DAY ONE: Read Ephesians 1:1-14

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?

a. Ephesians 1:1-14 has been divided into 4 sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

**Verses 1-2**

**Verses 3-6**

**Verses 7-12**

**Verses 13-14**

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

*God, Jesus, Spirit, and the phrase in Him or in Christ*

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in Ephesians 1:1-14. Remember, as you mark the words, *God, Jesus, and Spirit*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Them such as *He, Him, whom* or *Himself*. Sometimes you may not be able to identify whether a personal pronoun refers to the Father as God or to Jesus as God. It may be helpful to mark those you are not sure of with both symbols (the one you have chosen for Jesus and the one you have chosen for the Father). You do not need to mark every word that refers them - only those that you feel are significant.

3. Now, go back over the verses that contain references you marked with symbols for God and Jesus. Make a list of what the text reveals about what God has done and promises to do. Record the verse reference next to each one. We have started the list for you below:
  1. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing (verse 3)
  2. He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame before Him (verse 4)
  
- a. Glance back over the list and take a moment to thank Him for all He has done for you. Record just one item from the list that you are grateful for and share why.

## **DAY TWO: Read Ephesians 1:1-2**

1. The letter to the Ephesians was written by the apostle Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome for preaching the gospel. According to verse 1, what does Paul call himself?
  - a. An *apostle* can be described as one commissioned to do something as one's representative. Who was Paul representing?
    - 1.) What might be some of the responsibilities of representing another?
  
2. Paul was called to be an apostle *by the will of God*. Before his conversion, Paul thought he was called to be a persecutor of Christians *by the will of God*. That day, when Paul encountered Jesus Christ on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1-8), he discovered the gross error of his ways. What lesson can we learn from Paul's experience so that we do not falsely believe we are carrying out God's will? Notice the question Paul asked in Acts 9:6.

3. Ephesians 1:1 tells us Paul was writing *to the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus*. Read this phrase again and record how Paul described those he was writing to.
  - a. In using the words *saints* and *faithful*, Paul is not only describing all of the Christians in Ephesus, but all true Christians. All believers are *saints* (set apart ones for God) and *faithful* (in the context of this verse, those who have put their *faith* in Jesus). Neither word describes a person as a result of anything good that they have done. What does it mean to you that God calls you a *saint* and *faithful*, not because of any work you have done, but because of His work in your life?
  
4. In Paul's opening words in verse 2, what two things does Paul desire for the *saints* and *faithful*?
  - a. Where (Who) does *grace* and *peace* come from?
    - 1.) As Christians, we believe that *grace* and *peace* come from God. Yet, too often, we behave as if He is only one source of *grace* and *peace*. What are some other things believers might foolishly look to to meet the desire for *grace* and *peace*?

### DAY THREE: Read Ephesians 1:3-6

1. The first verse of Ephesians 1 reveals to us the beneficiaries of this letter. In the next verses, Paul turns to reveal the Benefactor – the One who has secured not only our sainthood, but much, much more. According to verses 3-6, what has God done for the believer?
  
2. The phrase *in heavenly places* is used five times in Ephesians. Highlight each occurrence of this phrase.
 

**Ephesians 1:3** *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,*

**Ephesians 1:20** *which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

**Ephesians 2:6** *and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*

**Ephesians 3:10** *to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,*

**Ephesians 6:12** *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

  - a. Make a list of what these verses tell us about *heavenly places*.

3. Ephesians 1:4 addresses God's calling of those He has *chosen* to receive His *blessing*. When did He *choose* us?
  - a. What did He *choose* us to be?

Notice: It is not within the context of this homework lesson to debate the doctrine of *predestination*. What we do know from these verses is that *saints* (believers in Jesus Christ) have been *chosen* by God to receive spiritual blessings. Let us spend this lesson rejoicing in that fact rather than debating theologies which man has yet to resolve.

4. Using verses 5 and 6, answer the following questions:
  1. What did He *predestine* us to? (verse 5)
  2. What did He make us? (verse 6)
  3. Why did He do this (*according to what*)? (verse 5)
  4. What does it mean to you that it brings *pleasure* to God to do these things?

#### DAY FOUR: Read Ephesians 1:7-12

1. In these verses we focus on Jesus, our precious Redeemer. A key phrase in this section is *in Him*, for it is because of Him we have all of the privileges and rights of a child of God. According to verse 7, what do we have *in Him*?

Challenge: Define *redemption*

- a. How much did your *redemption* cost? See 1 Peter 1:18-19
2. We see again, in verse 9, that God does great things for us *according to His good pleasure*. What does this verse say He has done?

Challenge: Define the *mysteries of God*.

- a. According to 1 Corinthians 2:10, how does God reveal His mysteries?
3. Notice the word *that* in Ephesians 1:10,12. This word indicates that God does things for a reason. Record His intentions by filling in the blanks below:

*that...He might \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.*

*that \_\_\_\_\_ who first \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ should be to the \_\_\_\_\_.*

4. The New Living Translation translates Ephesians 1:10-12 as follows:  
*And this is his plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ – everything in heaven and on earth. <sup>11</sup>Furthermore, because of Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us from the beginning, and all things happen just as he decided long ago. <sup>12</sup>God's purpose was that we who were the first to trust in Christ should praise our glorious God.*

Choose a phrase from this translation and share what it means to you.

#### **DAY FIVE: Read Ephesians 1:13-14**

1. Only the saved are partakers of this rich inheritance proclaimed in the previous verses. According to verse 13, what are the four steps of salvation?
  - a. What is the *word of truth*?
  - b. Explain how a *belief* that saves, includes *trust*.
2. In these first few verses of Ephesians we have seen God as our great Benefactor, we have seen the believer as the beneficiary, and now, in verses 13 and 14, we see the Holy Spirit as the One who is the Guarantor of all that God has declared for us. According to verse 13, what happens to us, once we believe?
  - a. What do the following verses teach about this?  
2 Corinthians 1:22  
  
2 Timothy 2:19
  - b. Using synonyms, define the word *seal*.
3. How is the Holy Spirit described in Ephesians 1:14?
  - a. How would you describe a *guarantee*?
4. How long will the Holy Spirit be a *guarantee of our inheritance*?
  - a. *Redemption*, as it is used in this verse, refers to the final redemption, when all things will be the way God intends them to be. What are just a few things that will be different then from the way they are now?

5. Notice the last phrase of verse 14. This is the third time Paul has used this phrase (verses 6 and 12). What is the phrase?
  - a. This would indicate that the response God is looking for from us is *praise*. How does this personally challenge you to live your life right now?

### **DAY SIX: Review Ephesians 1:1-14**

1. As believers, we have received many *spiritual blessings*. Share just a few that are special to you.
  
2. God has granted the believer spiritual blessings *according to His good pleasure*. How would you explain this to someone who felt like they had to earn God's blessings?
  
3. Scan through the verses in this lesson and record some of the phrases that assure us that God will accomplish His plans for us.
  
4. Share one thing from this lesson that has impacted you.

*This people I have formed for Myself;  
They shall declare My praise.  
- Isaiah 43:21*