

EPHESIANS – Session 1.

Chosen by the Father, Redeemed by the Son and Sealed by the Spirit

Read Eph. 1.1-2.

What credentials does Paul give?

How does he describe the Ephesian Christians? (and what does the word 'saint' mean in the New Testament?)

What are the two gifts Paul gives to them? (Note that in Bible terms they are gifts not pious wishes)

What does the word 'grace' mean to the person in the street and what did it mean to Paul?

What is the Biblical meaning of the word 'peace'?

Finally share what these two verses have said to you personally.

Read Eph. 1.3-14.

Paul's mind soars as he envisions the greatness of the purpose of God and the work of Christ.

Underline in your Bible the 3 times the phrase 'to the praise of His glory' (or glorious grace) occur.

What do you gather is the purpose of our lives as Christians?

Does praise come easy to you – at all times?

Underline the 3 times the words 'in accordance with His pleasure and will' are used.

What do you gather from these phrases?

For what purpose did God choose us? (v.4-5)

What does 'holy' mean to the person in the street and what does it mean here?

What 2 benefits do we gain from Christ? (v.7)

What is the mystery which has now been revealed to us and when will it be effected? (v.10)

(Mystery here means something long kept secret but now revealed. It encompasses questions like 'Why was I born?', 'Is there any meaning or purpose to life?', 'Is there any plan or pattern in history?').

The implication is that all things are now disunited, disintegrated. And this is not just confined to human relationships but penetrates to nature (Cf. Rom.8.22), the universe, the whole of creation and 'things in heaven and things on earth'(Cf. 6.12). Things have gone to pieces but in Christ will one day all be gathered and put together again in one harmonious whole as God intended them to be.

The great rift in N.T. times was between Jew and Gentile. Jewish Christians still meet separately from Arab Christians.

What would Paul say to that?

What steps brought the Gentiles into the Kingdom? (v.13)

(Would hear, believe, receive, sum it up?)

What guarantee of our salvation do we have? (v.13-14)

Thinking about Ephesians 1.1-14

Our heading is 'Chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son and sealed by the Spirit'.

What verses justify this heading?

How does this make you feel?

How many references with phrases like 'In Christ', 'in Him' and 'in whom' can you find in Eph.1.1-14?

Has there been anything you have not understood in this passage?

What has meant most to you in this passage?

Has your view of God or of Christ changed through this passage?

Have you a text or phrase which has challenged or thrilled you particularly?