

Grace Bible Church
Adult Elective Winter 2017
Topic: Ephesians

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Textbook Recommended: Living Insights - Ephesians by Chuck Swindoll

Ephesians Chapter 1

- Paul's letter to the Ephesians begins with an overview of God's salvific work in us, with an emphasis on God's sovereignty and grace toward a fallen people unable to save themselves.
- 1:1-2
 - Saul (who was renamed "Paul") was a Jew from Tarsus, an important city in southern Asia Minor (a metropolitan city). Saul was also a Roman citizen (so his parents were likely very wealthy and very influential as citizenship was not a right but a privilege). Saul was also trained by the best known Pharisee, a rabbi named Gamaliel (Acts 22).
 - Paul introduces himself as an apostle (Gk: "sent one"). This meant that he had encountered the risen Christ and had been entrusted with personally proclaiming His message.
 - These verses emphasize that God had (in His sovereignty) hand-picked Paul.
 - The recipients were "saints" who were "faithful".
 - Saints are all believers/Christians (chosen and set apart by God)
 - These believers/saints were joined to Christ and were joined to one another.
- 1:3-6
 - Gk *eulogia* means "praise" in English. This is used here as "praise" and "blessing".
 - All God does is for His own honor and glory, of which He is fully/wholly worthy.
 - The doxologies in v. 6, 12, and 14 pertain to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (respectively).
 - This is, at its core, a passage of praise to God for what He has done, is doing, and will do.
 - REASONS TO PRAISE GOD:
 - 1. Praise God for His Spiritual Blessings
 - believers have these blessings due to their relationship with God.
 - 2. Praise God because He chose us.
 - God chose us for spiritual blessings (including salvation).

- We accepted God's spiritual blessings (His gracious gifts to us).
 - Election **and** Free Will
 - 3. Praise God because of His adoption of us.
 - being children of God gives us the benefits of being in God's family (the same rights as "natural children")!
- 1:7-12
 - 4. Praise God because He redeemed us.
 - God paid a price for us and purchased us from the bondages of sin with the price of His Son's body and blood.
 - 5. Praise God because He forgave us.
 - God does not hold any sin against us (past, present, or future... cf. Ps. 103).
 - 6. Praise God because He lavished us with grace
 - This gives us abundant life as it was meant to be!
 - 7. Praise God because His will, which was hidden in the Old Testament is now revealed in the New Testament.
 - 8. Praise God because we have an eternal inheritance with Him.
- 1:13-14
 - 9. Praise God because He has sealed us with His Spirit.
 - Gk. *sphragizo* means "to make secure" and implies ownership or closure.
 - 10. Praise God because His eternal inheritance is guaranteed!
 - Gk. *arrabon* means "pledge" or "down payment"
 - The Holy Spirit is our pledge binding us to God the Father until our ultimate inheritance of glorified resurrection bodies!
- 1:15-16
 - Paul uses this and subsequent sections to reveal to his readers genuine prayer.
 - Open, heartfelt dialogue with our Father.
 - Paul starts by praying with thanksgiving. With all that Paul had done and seen, imagine how extensive this must have been!
 - The basis of Paul's thankfulness is the **faith** and **love** of the Ephesians.
 - How would their faith likely look, and how would it have reached Paul?
 - What did the love toward the saints look like? What are some practical things that they (and we!) could do?
 - What does it look like to be a united body of Christ (in the context of multiple denominations, etc.)?

- 1:17-19
 - Paul asks that God give the readers **wisdom** and **revelation** related to God.
 - This is essentially a deeply intimate, relational, understanding of God.
 - This is possible via direct communication with the Holy Spirit.
 - Wisdom is application of knowledge (theological truths applied to life).
 - Cf. James 3:17
 - Revelation refers to the removal of a shroud, or the introduction of new insights regarding God's perspective on our lives and His world (and our subsequent obedience to Him given a knowledge of His will for us).
 - Paul asks that God give the readers divine illumination related to the **hope** of God's calling, the **riches** of His inheritance and greatness of His **power**.
 - The hope is to a new life (now and in the future) where we know God/Christ/Holy Spirit, live for Him, and live as a unified body of Christ.
 - The riches of God's inheritance literally includes everything God has done for us (salvation, provision, adoption into His family, etc.). cf. 1 Peter 1:4
 - The power of God is all encompassing: total life change
- 1:20-23
 - Demonstrations of God's power include:
 - His raising of Christ from the dead
 - His exultation of Christ to His right hand
 - His giving to Christ of all things
 - His giving to Christ the church
- SUMMARY OF EPHESIANS CHAPTER 1
 - Vv. 1-14: Praise
 - Vv. 17-16: Thanksgiving
 - Vv. 17-23: Prayer

APPLICATION: God's Awesome Power

1.) The Holy Spirit gives us God's power and it changes our lives.

- Acts 1:8
- Romans 15:13
- 2 Timothy 1:7

2.) God's power is shown strong through our weakness

- 1 Cor. 1:26-29
- 2 Cor. 12:9
- 2 Cor. 13:4

NOTE: Materials developed from Chuck Swindoll's Living Insights Series.