

Ephesians – Great things come in small packages!

You will find that the letter to the Ephesians is just a few pages long. You may be thinking that this should not take too long to study. Well, this letter is so comprehensive in its' understanding of Christian doctrine and relevance and the practical application to us, that John Calvin, the French born Swiss Protestant Church reformer and theologian spent 48 consecutive sermons explaining it to his congregation!

In this beginning chapter of the book Paul sets about unfolding the mystery of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He reveals God's purpose for our lives, which has been since before the creation of the world.

Did you ever feel that some people go through life missing the point? We can live our lives enjoying many good things and blessings whilst learning to cope with the hardships and struggles, yet this passage asks us to approach life from God's perspective in order that we can live out our lives in the way He has always intended. Ephesians 1 reveals the true identity and purposes of God – Father, spirit, Son. For the Christian understanding is that God the Father, Jesus the Son, and God the Holy Spirit existed before the creation of the world. The fact of the matter is that God choose you and I to be holy and blameless in his sight before the creation of the world. Let's look again at the passage...

Christianity begins not with a big DO, but with a big DONE !

See verse 3....God's goal is to bring about a world, a universe, a cosmic family filled with blessings and goodness. That means **seeing ourselves through God's eyes**...verse 4...

...he chose us in him before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight. (Ephesians 1:4)

Incredible ! This suggests that God purposefully chose us and thought of us before the beginning or foundations of the world. His destiny for us is that we would be holy and blameless in his sight... *holiness* means "wholeness," and **wholeness means "to be restored to the originally intended functioning"**

It is only through the death and resurrection of Jesus that God has made this all possible. So now in and through Jesus, although ***we are not sinless, we are blameless when we receive his forgiveness and promise of new life!*** Its all good news...

The God of Christianity is ***an all inclusive God***. He wants all of us to accept His invitation to be in His family – children of God....

For you and I are a child of God

In Roman law, children who were adopted had the same rights as those living with their natural, biological parents. God intends to adopt us as His own. He can do this through Jesus.

“In him, we were also chosen having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will” ***God has let us into His big plan! To bring all things in heaven and on earth together in Jesus.*** You and I are in the heart of God's plan; he created us as an expression of His love. He thought of us, before even the foundation of the earth to be adopted children, and here's the icing on the cake...

...we are marked with a seal, with the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession - to the praise of his glory.

When we receive and accept who Jesus is, his love for us shown on the cross, The Holy Spirit is immediately within us. We are no longer our own but Gods. Someone once said this...

“I couldn't let go of my faith. But what I think is more interesting is that I don't think God will let go of me”

Even when we are faithless – god is faithful to us for he cannot disown himself!

Questions...

How do you relate to the Truine God?

In what ways can we deal with feeling guilty and yet being blameless in God's sight?

If you want to, share your own experience or understanding of being “an adopted child of God's” with the group?

***Do you think its true that God cannot let us go once we have received him into our lives?
And that we are “sealed by the Spirit”?***

If we lived every day in the light of the truth of this passsge what difference would it make to us and to our neighbours?