



Ephesians – The Blessings we have in Christ

Date: Sunday 4th March 2018

Speakers: Adam Pipe

Key Verses: Ephesians 1, Acts 19 (for context)

Summary

- In the book of Ephesians, we see how the gospel story affects believers' everyday lives. God the Father planned throughout history for Jesus to create a multi-ethnic community of followers. Comprised of Jews and non-Jews, these followers form the covenant family God promised to Abraham. They live in unity as one body in their families, neighbourhoods, and churches because of God's grace.
- Scripture, prayer, and their relationships with each other equip them to put off their old humanity and put on new humanity that mimics Jesus and marks them as mature followers of Jesus.
- Energised by the Holy Spirit, believers also stand tall against the spiritual evil that threatens their unity as a Church family and maturity as followers of Jesus.
- 'The letter to the Ephesians is a marvellously concise, yet comprehensive, summary of the Christian good news and its implications. Nobody can read it without being moved to wonder and worship, and challenged to consistency of life.' John Stott
- Paul summarises the Gospel story and how it should reshape every part of our story. So the tagline for this series is: An invitation into God's story
- In the talk Adam introduced the letter to the Ephesians and looked at some of the Spiritual blessings that Paul says we have in Christ and his prayer that we know them as a reality in our lives.

- Paul's Prologue 1:1-2
 - All Saints 1:1
 - Two Addresses 1:1
 - Grace and Peace 1:2
- Paul's Praise 1:3-14
 - Adopted by the Father 1:5
 - Set Free by the Son 1:7
 - Guaranteed by the Spirit 1:13-14
- Paul's Prayer 1:15-23
 - Know Him 1:17
 - Know Hope 1:18
 - Know Holy Spirit 1:19-21

Questions for Small Groups

- What do you know about Ephesus and the book of Ephesians?
- If you haven't already, watch the Bible Project Ephesians summary video: what stood out to you? What excites you about our series in Ephesians?
- For those who were at church this week what stood out to you about the talk?
- In 1:1 Paul talks about the believers being both 'in Ephesus' and 'in Christ' what does it mean to be both 'in Birmingham' and 'in Christ'? Which one needs to be more of a reality in our lives?
'Many of our spiritual troubles arise from the failure to remember that we are citizens of two kingdoms. We tend to either to pursue Christ and withdraw from the world, or to become preoccupied with the world and forget that we are also in Christ.' John Stott
- List the Spiritual blessings we have 'in Christ' from verses 3-14 (may be worth writing them up on large sheet of paper in middle of the room).
- Look at verse 5 and discuss the concept of being 'adopted' (cross refer to Romans 8:15). How does adoption lead to intimacy with God?
- In verses 13-14 Paul focuses on the Holy Spirit as a sign that we are God's treasured possession and as a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance (cross refer to Acts 19 and the importance Paul places on believers being sealed with the Spirit). Discuss the role of the Spirit in our lives. Where do we need to see more of the Spirit? (This is a great moment to lead into ministry time).
- Look at Paul's prayer in 15:23. What does he pray that the Ephesians would know? What role does Hope play in our day to day lives?

Resources for Reflection

- [The Bible Project Video on Ephesians](#)
- [A poster version of the Ephesians Summary](#)

To ponder or pray about this week

- Go around the group or break into smaller groups and chat about which of the blessings Paul refers to people need to know more of in their lives. Pray for each other during the coming weeks as we go through Ephesians.
- We'd encourage you to spend some time and read the letter to the Ephesians through in one go, or to listen to it online, it can be found for free on the Bible Gateway website.