

Ephesians

Lesson 2 Ephesians 1:1-14

Participant Guide

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Lesson 2

Ephesians 1:1-14

God's Assurance and Security

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Ephesians 1:4

Prayers

Introduction

Our pastor gave a wonderful children's sermon on labeling things and people. He printed off sheets of labels on stickers and placed the words "fun" and "smart" on the associate pastor. Then asked if any of the kids had ever experienced being called a bad word or labeled with a bad word. In contrast, the Bible had wonderful labels for them, words like "kind," "wise," "holy," and "compassionate." Each child received a label. The little boy sitting in front of us came back beaming and proudly showed his parents his label, "loved."

Paul used a similar technique in the first chapter of his letter to the Ephesians to show how deeply God loved them and provided for them. Paul's labels for God's love for us are words like chosen, holy, blameless, predestined, adopted, child of God, redeemed, and saved. These labels are woven together in the form of a short hymn or doxology as one continuous thought. In this lesson, we will spend some time thinking about God's labels for us.

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Eph 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

Eph 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Eph 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

Eph 1:5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—

Eph 1:6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Eph 1:8 that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Eph 1:9 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,

Eph 1:10 to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Eph 1:11 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,

Eph 1:12 in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. Eph 1:13
And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.
Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,
Eph 1:14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's
possession—to the praise of his glory.

Discuss

1. Paul addresses his letter to the saints in Ephesus with a common greeting – grace and peace. Let's take a moment to review the meanings of the words in his introduction.

Apostle – comes from the ancient Greek "*Apostolos*," "**a person sent.**" An *Apostolos* was a person sent with a message and can be translated as messenger, envoy, or ambassador. Christian writers used the word apostle for Jesus (Hebrews 3:1), the original 12 disciples, and Paul. Paul said that signs, wonders, and miracles accompany the calling of an apostle (2 Corinthians 12:12).

Disciple – The word for disciple comes from the ancient Greek for "*learner* ." A disciple is someone who makes the mental effort to think something through. A disciple of Christ makes an effort to understand Jesus' teachings and obey them.

Saint – comes from the medieval Latin word "*sanctus*," meaning holy or set apart. A saint is "**a holy one,**" someone set apart for God's special purposes. Everyone who is a disciple of Christ is a saint. The holiness of a saint is found in their unity with Christ, Christ as their righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30), not by their own actions.

Grace and peace to you in verse 2 were the two most common greetings in the Greek and Jewish world. Grace to you (*charis*) was the Greek equivalent to "Have a good day." Peace (*Shalom*) in Hebrew was wishing someone well in every aspect of their being. Paul used the same greetings from the perspective of someone who has received God's grace to be in Christ so they can be at peace with God. In this way, God's grace always comes before his peace. What are some of the many blessings you have in Christ that you could complete Paul's greeting with:

Have a good day because of _____.

2. In verses 3-14, Paul uses words that are the foundation of our church doctrines. How would you define Paul's words? How are these concepts personally important to you?
 - a. Verse 4 chosen
 - b. Verse 4 holy and blameless
 - c. Verse 5 predestined

- d. Verse 5 adopted
- e. Verse 5 God's sons, sons of God
- f. Verse 5 grace
- g. Verse 7 forgiveness – mercy
- h. Verse 7 redeemed
- i. Verse 13 salvation

3. Peter wrote his letter to the "elect," verse 1. The idea of God's election is often misunderstood but is synonymous with being chosen or called. The ideas of election and predestination go hand in hand. Read the following verses and explain what it means to be the elect and predestined.

[Jesus speaking] ^{Mt 24:22} **If those days [the last days] had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.**

[Paul writing] ^{Eph 1:4} For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

4. How do God's predestination and mercy give you complete security in Christ?
5. Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as God's seal in his letters to the Ephesians (verses 1:13, 4:30) and 2 Corinthians (verses 1:21-22, 5:5). The word seal refers to the seal of a signet ring – sealed with authority for security and attested to as genuine. How does God's seal of the Holy Spirit give you assurance in your faith?

6. In the first 14 verses of Ephesians, Paul contrasts the works of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What are some of the works of each?

Gods Work

Verse 3,
Verse 4,
Verse 5,
Verse 5,
Verse 6,
Verse 8-9
Verse 10
Verse 11
Verse 12

Christ's Work

Verse 7
Verse 7

The Spirit's Work

Verse 14

Closing

Dear Father in heaven,
Help me always remember that you have known and loved me before creation. You created my inmost being. You have ordained all the days of my life. Search, test, guide, and lead me in the way of everlasting life through Christ, my Lord. Amen