

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## EPHESIANS CHAPTER ONE "RICHES IN CHRIST"

### Lesson 2

Have you ever wondered why the church exists? It is not just a building or a denomination in which Christians congregate for a sermon and fellowship. The church is a living organism; it is called "the Body of Christ." The church is comprised of all believers and they are the instruments God uses to accomplish His work here on earth. It has been said that the first three chapters of Ephesians show how:

Christ was God's instrument to reconcile the church to God.  
The Church is Christ's instrument to reconcile the world to Christ.

The first three chapters of Ephesians tell us how we've been united together as a church through Christ. The last three teach us how each member of the church should live and function in this world so God's eternal purpose for the church will be accomplished.

The first chapter of Ephesians, which you are studying this week, reveals the rich blessings we have in Christ. Take a moment as you note these blessings to thank God for each of them and then incorporate them in your thanks and praise vocabulary.

Especially note the mystery unfolded which reveals God's ultimate intention for the church. Ephesians 1:9,10. Think of the eternal future He has prepared for you!

Then as you read Paul's prayer for the Ephesian Christians (Ephesians 1:15-19) it will help you as you pray for other Christians. Can you imagine how blessed the Church is when Christians pray like this for one another and believers begin to have a fresh revelation in the knowledge of Who God is, what riches we have in Him, and the exceeding greatness of His power which works in us?

Begin the lesson this week by praying Paul's prayer for you, yourself, as you study this chapter.

An **Apostle** is "one who is sent." It meant one of a small group of men that the church recognized as having authority from God to clarify the teaching of the body.

**Saints** were "holy ones." The Old Testament used this word for the Chosen Ones-the Israelites. Paul included all-even Gentile believers.

**Grace** means the "kindness of God toward undeserving people"

Jewish letters during the time of Paul usually opened with a sentence giving the titles of the sender and the addressee. Then came a salutation wishing peace and blessing to the addressee.

### DAY ONE

Read Ephesians Chapter 1:1-2

1. How does Paul describe himself?
2. What is the source of his authority?
3. To better understand how Paul got his authority, read Acts 22:6-16.
4. What two words did Paul use to identify the Christians in Ephesus?

Peace is "wholeness" or a "gift of God affecting the totality of our lives."

5. In verse 2, Paul greets the saints with "grace and peace." Why does the word "grace" precede "peace"?

Imagine yourself in one of the early church's weekly meetings. The people might have shared a meal and Communion together. The meetings were spent singing hymns, hearing passages of Scripture read, discussing the Scriptures, listening to teaching, and praying. Everyone participated in the service with words of encouragement and teaching. At this time a letter such as Paul's might have been read.

DAY TWO

1. Read Ephesians 1:3-14, preferably aloud, as if you were hearing it for the first time. What effect did Paul want to have on those listening to these words?

Verse 3 is a summary of the Father's work for us.

2. Why do you think Paul begins by blessing God?

"Blessed" means "eulogize" or "bestow high praise upon" God for His marvelous blessing to the church.

3. What does Paul say God has blessed us with? (vs.3) What does EVERY spiritual blessing mean to you?

4. In verse 4-14, Paul now begins to list the specific blessings that God has bestowed upon us. Write down the blessings, personalizing them by writing "me" instead of "us," "I" instead of "we".

Verse 4  
\_\_\_\_\_

Verse 5  
\_\_\_\_\_

Verse 6  
\_\_\_\_\_

Verse 7  
\_\_\_\_\_

Verse 9  
\_\_\_\_\_

Verses 11-12  
\_\_\_\_\_

Verses 13-14  
\_\_\_\_\_

To increase your understanding of the blessings available to you in Christ, we will do a more in-depth study of verses 3-14 by using **cross-references**. These are passages in Scripture that will shed light on the passage you are studying.

### DAY THREE

1. Read Ephesians 1:4. Look up the following cross-references to the key words below and write down how they enlighten your understanding of these words:

a. **chosen-**

Psalm 4:3

James 2:5

I Peter 2:9-10

b. **holy-**

II Corinthians 7:1

I Peter 1:16

II Peter 3:11

I Thessalonians 4:7

c. **blameless-**

Philippians 2:15

Colossians 1:21-22

I Thessalonians 3:13

I Thessalonians 5:23

Now, write Ephesians 1:4 in your own words:

2. Read Ephesians 1:5. Follow the directions as in question 1.

a. **predestined-**

Romans 8:29

Romans 9:23

II Timothy 1:9

Titus 1:2

b. **adoption-**

Romans 8:14-17

Galatians 3:26

Now, write Ephesians 1:5 in your own words:

3. Read Ephesians 1:6. Follow the same directions in the previous questions.

a. **accepted-**

Acts 10:35

Now, write Ephesians 1:6 in your own words:

**PERSONAL:** Do you feel accepted in the beloved? Why or why not?

#### DAY FOUR

1. Read Ephesians 1:7-8\*. In your own words, how does God enable us to become holy and blameless?

2. For a greater understanding of our redemption through the blood of Christ, read Heb. 9:1-10:18.

a. Briefly describe the Old Testament's plan for redemption.

b. What is the New Testament's plan for redemption from our sins? (Also see Galatians 1:3b-4a.)

c. Have you experienced the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ? What does this redemption mean to you, and how has it changed your life?

3. In Ephesians 1:5,6,7 and 14, Paul repeats God's reason for giving us these blessings. What should the result of these blessings be in our lives?

4. In verse 10, Paul reveals God's ultimate goal for the church. Read this verse in a modern translation then re-write this goal in your own words.

5. Read Ephesians 1:13 and 14\*\*. Read in other versions also. Paul states that our blessings are secure because God had "sealed" us with His Holy Spirit.

a. What does being "sealed" with the Holy Spirit mean? (also see Eph. 4:30; II Cor. 1:22).

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\* Eph. 1:7 - **Redemption**-a releasing from slavery or the death penalty on payment of ransom. In this case, freedom from the penalty of sin.

\* \* Eph. 1:14 - **Earnest**-The word translated earnest also means "engagement ring."

6. To help you summarize what you have learned in Ephesians 1:3-14, answer the following questions:

a. Where are we blessed with every spiritual blessing (Verse 3b).

(1.) He chose us. . . . .When did He choose us? (Verse 4).

(2.) He adopted us. . . .Why did He adopt us? (Verse 5).

(3.) He accepted us. . . .Where are we accepted? (Verse 6) KJV.

(4.) He redeemed us. . . .How are we redeemed? (Verse 7).

(5.) He forgave us . . . . .To what degree are we forgiven? (Verse 7).

(6.) From Whom have we obtained our inheritance? (Verse 11 - Also see verse 3a).

(7.) By Whom are we sealed? (Verse 13).

7. Ephesians 1:3-14 is one of the longest sentences in the Bible. Paul goes on and on with a heart so full of praise the he can't find a place to put a period! What do the blessings in verses 3-14 mean to you? Take time to praise God for these blessings in your life.

Paul's response to the many blessings that Christ has given to the believer is a prayer of thanksgiving in Ephesians 1:15-23.

"Wisdom and revelation"-  
the ability not only to  
learn, but also to teach. . .  
the revealed secret to  
others.

"Know"- real, deep  
full knowledge.  
Biblical knowledge  
is intimate relationship,  
as opposed to grasping  
of facts.

**DAY FIVE**

Read Ephesians 1:15-19 then answer the following questions.

1. What did Paul give thanks for? (Ephesians 1:15-16).

2. What did Paul pray for the Ephesians? Use your own words.

verse 17 \_\_\_\_\_

verse 18 a \_\_\_\_\_

verse 18 b \_\_\_\_\_

"Heart"-the seat of a person's thought, will and emotions; the center of his being.

"Hope"- a sure expectation

"That is why, ever since I heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and of the love you have for Christians everywhere, I have never stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you wisdom to see clearly and really understand who Christ is and all that He has done for you. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can see something of the future He has called you to share. I want you to realize that God has been made rich because we who are Christ's have been given to Him! I pray that you will begin to understand how incredibly great His power is to help those who believe Him. It is that same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God's right hand in heaven. . ." Eph. 1:15-20 TLB.

3. Underline a particular phrase of this prayer that you want to appropriate to your life today. Write it here and meditate on it.

### DAY SIX

Today we want you to concentrate on the power of God that is available to every believer. We are not meant to live this life in weakness and defeat. God's power toward us and in us is so vital to our living a victorious Christian life we need to give full attention to these incredible verses.

Read Ephesians 1:19-23.

1. What 2 words does Paul use to describe God's power in verse 19 (KJV)? Selah (Pause and think about this).
  - a. What words would you use to describe God's power?
2. List the examples that Paul uses to describe this power in verses 20-23.
3. What power did Paul so long to know in Philippians 3:10?
  - a. Is this power adequate for the circumstances you find yourself in today? THINK ABOUT THIS.
  - b. As you meditate on this power that raised Christ from the dead, how does this change your perspective?
4. How do you think Paul would know the resurrection power of God?

5. Christians need power for several reasons. From the following scriptures, what are 3 reasons we need this power?

a. Matthew 26:41

b. Ephesians 6:11,12

c. Romans 12:2a

d. Other reasons

6. What are some of the hinderances that keep you from appropriating God's power in your life?

7. What are evidences of God's power working in your life?

8. What life changing truth have you discovered in this lesson? Be prepared to share.

