



Connection Group Questions
September 12, 2021
Series: Ephesians- Union and Unity

***“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.”
~ Ephesians 1:3***

Opening

You walk into an event. You are asked to put on a name tag. But you can't write your name. What do you write? ***“I am _____.”***

Identity and purpose are vital to our existence. Ephesians will outline an identity found in Christ (union) and a purpose to be lived out in the church (unity). Before we get into Ephesians how would you define or describe union and unity?

Digging Deeper

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

Keep your bibles open, and a study bible close. This will have a lot of information on the author, audience, background, outline, theological themes, etc.

Introduction, verses 1-2

Paul addresses the letter to the saints or Holy Ones. Do you identify yourself as a sinner or a saint? How might your identity as a saint impact your life and understanding of yourself?

The first words are “grace and peace to you.” How might this be an example to us and our interactions with others- family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, church members?

Spiritual Blessings, verses 3-14

This run-on sentence or prayer and praise expounds upon the blessings of union with Jesus. Count how many times we read “in him” or “in Christ” or “in the one.” What do we have in Christ in each occurrence?

Read this passage again and take note of the trinitarian language. Where do we see reference to God the Father, Jesus the son, and the Holy Spirit?

Verses 3-6: Predestined for Adoption

While it is difficult, or even unwise, to try and break up or categorize this prayer of praise, it does help us to see and understand the themes within. In the verse 4 verses we learn that we

are chosen, predesigned, by the will of God, to be holy and blameless, adopted into the family of God.

What do you make of God's choosing before the creation of the world? What about being predestined for adoption? Read Romans 8:29-30, "The Golden Thread" of election. (foreknown, predestined, called, justified, glorified). Does the revelation of God's election bring you comfort, or confusion? Where do you see yourself on the thread of free will and predestination? How do we hold seemingly contradictory ideas in harmony (The fancy word is "Antinomy"?)

Verse 4 tells us that God predestined us "in love." Why is that so easily missed but so vital to understand who God is and how God works? Do you sense God chasing you in love? DO you have confidence that you are part of the "us" Paul is writing?

Verses 7-10: Redeemed for Unity

Pauls employs the language of the Exodus. Why is it so important to see the work of Jesus through the Old Testament? How does the exodus foreshadow the work of Jesus, and how does Jesus fulfill the work of exodus?

We have the riches of God's grace lavished on us. How does that make you feel? What difference should that make in your life?

Verses 11-14: Sealed with the Spirit

There it is again, predestined. Gos is working everything out according to his will. What does this tells us about our lives and God's world?

The first to hope were the people of Israel. Now we, Gentiles, are being chosen and called. When did you hear? When did you believe? What there a moment when everything changed, or was your salvation more of a process?

Let's get personal, and real. Would you profess to be marked and sealed by the Holy Spirit? What does this mean for your life- past, present and future? What does it mean to wait for our redemption and our inheritance when we have already been redeemed (v. 7)?

Application

We've covered a lot, and have probably just scratched the surface. So let's go back to the start. How would you answer the question, "Do you believe in predestination?"

Remember, whatever God does He does in love.