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An exposition of Ephesians Chapter 1 Verses 1-23

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wow what an accolade that introductory description of Paul awards!

An accolade is defined as “An award or privilege granted as a special honour, or as acknowledgement of merit”.

As we saw last time, the times we live in could be depressing. That is until we read this chapter of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. In this chapter we are given so much to give thanks for, especially when we realise just how and when God had it all planned out.



*³ “Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us”. Where has he blessed us? In Broadstone, Poole? **NO**. In BBC York Road? **NO**. He has blessed us “In heavenly places, and with every spiritual blessing.”*

Even more amazingly we are aware that this was NOT God’s last resort after all other plans failed, BUT God had planned this “from before the foundation of the world.” He had chosen the elect in Christ for holy and blameless living. In Christ He has richly lavished the blessings of redemption, forgiveness, wisdom and understanding upon the elect. God’s will has always been to provide salvation and create His people through Christ’s blood. At the proper moment in history, He revealed His plan in the ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Those in Christ are saints. They are God’s children through their adoption in Christ. All who hear and believe the gospel are included in Christ’s people. The Holy Spirit in us marks us as being His. An important work of the spirit clearly is to protect God’s people. The metaphor of a seal (v 13) meant that the contents of the document under it, were protected by the power of the official who placed the seal and identified as belonging to the official. Christians are protected by the power of God and identified as His because he put His Spirit on them as a seal.

This security is a great source of assurance for Christians. Those who live with such security and assurance, quite understandably, experience boldness, joy, and peace as a result.

The Spirit is also a deposit or downpayment. A deposit is simply the first payment. The remainder will come later. The gift of the spirit is God's first payment to His people. The remainder of His blessings will be given later, in the life to come. The Spirit's presence with us is a foretaste of the life to come.

Pastor Tim, in his messages from the book of Ruth has made much of Boaz in his role of kinsman Redeemer. God Himself will redeem or fully restore so we are perfectly conformed to His will. Until then the Spirit in our lives guarantees we will be redeemed (see Romans 8 v 18-23).

In verse 15 Paul commends the Ephesian Fellowship for their love for one another. Love "does" more than it "feels". God's people love one another in different ways. Others come to know about this love through the deeds of love we do for each other. Such loving action brings joy and thanksgiving to God's people. Saints are holy ones because Christ's love for us impels us to show similar love to each other.

From this letter, Paul was obviously a dab hand at something most men are rubbish at (so I am told frequently) and that is multitasking! He must have spent hours on his knees in prayer when you consider the amount of people and places, he had "not stopped giving thanks for". Added to that was the long and often perilous journeys he undertook. Added to that the messages he preached and his oversight of young believers like Timothy. What a role model he made for the up-and-coming pastors of his day and ever since!

The redeeming grace of God is as much a disclosure of His power as it is of His love (v 19 & 20). The same power that brought Jesus from the dead (Could there be a greater display of power?) is available to the believer in Christ, both in time and eternity. What God does in transforming human lives in this world and what He is doing in giving them eternal life in the next world are both examples of His mighty power. Jesus' resurrection and ascension revealed God's unsurpassed power and established Jesus as supreme ruler over all heavenly and earthly powers for all eternity.

Those who truly "know" God experience Him in daily life. This is made possible by His own revelation and not by human discovery.

Revelation has one purpose, and that is to let us know God better. Such knowledge means relationship to a Person, not an accumulation of facts. The Holy Spirit is the immediate source of such revelation. The spirit leads us to an ever-deeper relationship with Christ.

In case you missed it please find attached an outline of Sam Gordon's message from Sunday morning on Ephesians chapter 2, as I hope it will bless you as much as it did me.

Transcript of the presentation given by Deacon Rodney Burge and discussed at the church home group on Tuesday 24th September 2024. All scripture is from both the ESV and NIV Translations