

042719

- I. My Notes... WWC message 4/28
- II. Series: Let's Find Out Who We Are
  - a. Title: In Him
  - b. Text: Eph. 1: 3-14
  - c. Quote: The wizard [of Oz] says look inside yourself and find self. God says look inside yourself and find [the Holy Spirit]. The first will get you to Kansas. The latter will get you to heaven. Take your pick. Max Lucado (Pastor, Author)
- III. Introduction
  - a. What do you do when you don't feel like praying? How about praising?

There are times that these choices seem like difficult ones. It can be a challenge to live the passage "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised..." (see Ps. 48:1, 145:3). The simple part of this passage is that God is "great" – He is boundless, awesome, incredible – we often sing "Indescribable, uncontainable, You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name. You are amazing God" (Indescribable by Chris Tomlin). Recognizing the majesty, the power, the authority that the Lord holds just takes a moment of observation. Nature declares (Psalm 19) His glory; mankind, creatures, life testifies of His wonder (Job 12). I can give you all kinds of Scripture that tells of God's worthiness of praise and adoration. That doesn't make it any easier or more feasible to pray, to praise, when there is struggle or difficulty. Craig Groeschel (Pastor, Author) wrote, "If God has done what you think he should do, trust him. If God doesn't do what you think he should do, trust him. If you pray and believe God for a miracle and he does it, trust him. If your worst nightmare comes true, believe he is sovereign. Believe he is good." (The Christian Atheist: Believing in God but Living As If He Doesn't Exist, Zondervan, 2010). It's about choice, a decision to act in spite of the situation. In talking with people, in the middle of

struggles, one thing we discuss is finding/seeing the good. What's the old thing about there being a "silver-lining" in every cloud? I have found that what one focuses on will be the thing in life that is magnified. Some time ago, I chose to start looking for blessings and joys, no matter what. They can be difficult to see, at times. But in making the choice to find the good, to discover joy when there seems to be none to be found my attitude began to shift from stress and despair to hope and happiness. The goodness of God is reflected in so many ways, it just takes us looking to see it.

- b. Psalm 119:140 (AMP): "Your word is very pure (tried and well refined); therefore Your servant loves it." God's behavior toward us brings love, a deeper intimacy, and understanding. It is worth celebrating His goodness and grace toward us. Too often, circumstances and situations can become overwhelming. They can try us and take us to places where value is diminished, we self-worth dwindles, and despair dominates. That is why it is imperative (essential, necessary) to learn what the Lord has said to us in this love letter we hold. This is always the hard part for me. See, I want to encourage, I want to say something that will inspire you and maybe help reshape your viewpoint about the circumstances you may be experiencing. You have heard me talk about "living behind enemy lines" and the truth that hard times are a part of daily life. But I have come to realize that you are here to listen to the Lord, to fellowship with Him and those you are close to. All I can do is to point the direction. Our task becomes believing what God says about each of us. How do you perceive the way that God knows you? Do you see yourself as worthy, God says you are (Matt. 6: 31-33); pure, God has made you so (2 Cor. 5:21); holy, He called us to it (1 Pet. 1:15-16). See, our viewpoint shapes the experience and understanding. If you have been hurt and controlled, it is easy to perceive that God is unloving and overbearing – criticized, God can be viewed as judgmental – and on it goes.

- c. What helps with all this is learning the role of the Holy Spirit in our walks and lives. The Holy Spirit is called Comforter, Counselor, Guide. Jesus said the Father would send “another Comforter” (John 14:16), that would be with us forever. The role of the Holy Spirit is to make each person aware of their need of a Savior. Everyone has an awareness of God – whether they want to admit it or not. The Holy Spirit brings the truth God's love and His desire that each person will come into a relationship with Him. The nature of God reveals the grace of God so that mankind will become open to His love and acceptance. As we come into a full relationship with the Lord, the Spirit has been given as a down-payment for our inheritance. Truth comes from the guidance of the same Holy Spirit in our lives (John 16:13) and because of this we come to know Jesus who He said He was (1 Cor. 12:3). The Holy Spirit is God, He has come to serve and to help us grow in grace.
- d. We are going to explore our relationship with the Holy Spirit and many of the things He has done for us. Let's start with the basics

#### IV. Getting Started

- a. Since the Holy Spirit came after Christ and He points man to a relationship with Him. We must understand the benefits of our relationship with our Lord
- b. Instead of dealing with us with material blessings, the Lord blessed us today with something eternal, better, and ore satisfying. Spiritual blessings impact us significantly
  - i. We are touched and influenced by the Spirit no matter what is going on around us (Rom. 5:5)
  - ii. Our relationship with the Spirit is eternal (John 14:16)
  - iii. These blessings are eternal
  - iv. And these blessings are a result of our relationship with Christ
- c. Romans 8:8-9 (CSB)

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.

- d. Believers aren't stuck into doing things the way they had... believers have been set free to live different, to be content and satisfied by knowing their purpose.
- e. We have been set free to find and fulfill God's purpose in our life (Gal. 5:1)
- f. And in doing that, we honor and glorify the Lord – we live praiseworthy lives

## V. Text

### a. Ephesians 1:3-14 (NCV)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, God has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world.

That is, in Christ, he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people—people without blame before him.

Because of his love, God had already decided to make us his own children through Jesus Christ. That was what he wanted and what pleased him, and it brings praise to God because of his wonderful grace. God gave that grace to us freely, in Christ, the One he loves.

In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have forgiveness of sins. How rich is God's grace, which he has given to us so fully and freely. God, with full wisdom and understanding, let us know his secret purpose. This was what God wanted, and he planned to do it through Christ.

His goal was to carry out his plan, when the right time came, that all things in heaven and on earth would be joined together in Christ as the head.

In Christ we were chosen to be God's people, because from the very beginning God had decided this in keeping with his plan. And he is the One who makes everything agree with what he decides and wants.

We are the first people who hoped in Christ, and we were chosen so that we would bring praise to God's glory.

So it is with you. When you heard the true teaching—the Good News about your salvation—you believed in Christ. And in Christ, God put his special mark of ownership on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that he had promised.

That Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will receive what God promised for his people until God gives full freedom to those who are his—to bring praise to God's glory.

- b. While this is divided into verses and punctuated, Paul wrote this passage as one sentence (and a powerful one at that)
- c. This passage deals with the plan God has for all believers (saints)
- d. God deals with His children spiritually and we get to discover what this means

## VI. Chosen

- a. The Lord God blessed us (believers) with “every spiritual blessing” (vs. 3)
- b. He will allow us to prosper, to excel
- c. Now, it may not seem like that at times. But the Lord has the best intentions for our life. Our eternal relationship with Him began at salvation. And He wants the best for His Kids
- d. We have been “chosen” (vs. 4), we have been elected to a specific purpose – to honor and glorify the Lord by loving Him and loving others, in practical ways
- e. We have been chosen to be holy. Being holy is being set apart for God's purpose
- f. And we are blameless. In other words, we don't have to pay the cost of our sins
- g. We are sinless in the eyes of the Lord. For one reason, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on behalf of you and I

- h. We have been chosen to be set apart to love, to show compassion, and to demonstrate grace, and to worship God (today) by obedience to the principles Jesus taught and the leading of the Holy Spirit

## VII. Family

- a. We are adopted into the family (vs. 5)
- b. We have all the rights and benefits of full membership into God's family
- c. We are "joint heirs" with Christ (Rom. 8:15-17). That means we have the full rights and benefits that comes with being born into the family
- d. We will share all the riches and benefits that the Lord Jesus is entitled to... both now and in the future
- e. We will reflect the Lord
- f. And others will see the goodness of God due to the family relationship
- g. Because of this we have been given "favor" (kindness, acceptance)

## VIII. Redemption

- a. Redemption involves bringing liberty to a captive, usually through the payment of a price
- b. We see throughout the NT that the Jesus' death on the cross was a redemptive act for humanity—as a "ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Paul speaks of "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). In verse 14, Paul will equate redemption with the forgiveness of sins.
- c. Redeemed, made pure, by the shed blood of Jesus
- d. This was a demonstration of love and grace. It was incredible compassion
- e. It was a choice Jesus made – having just come through Easter, we talked about the willing sacrifice of Christ
- f. The grace that redeemed us, that gave us a right relationship with the Father was a significant show of God's (eternal) love for us

## IX. Understanding

- a. We know what God's will is for our lives
- b. Matthew 13:11 (MSG)  
He replied, "You've been given insight into God's kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn't been given to them.
- c. We have been given the benefits of understanding God's purpose
- d. We are to bring Christ to the world
- e. To show love, grace, kindness, compassion
- f. Because of our relationship with Him, we have been given this privilege.  
And we have the help of the Holy Spirit

X. Inheritance and Salvation

- a. Unmeasurable wealth (if that's important to you), incredible status – related to the Creator of the Universe, and eternity in the presence of the Father
- b. Sometimes it seems like I talk about it too much, but it is because of grace that we have these things
- c. We have been given these blessings because of our family bond.
- d. We are blessed beyond compare so that we can have the confidence in the hard times to know we are loved and accepted
- e. We are favored so that in the moments of feeling alone, desperate, and unwanted we can find the strength to stand up and say I am chosen because God sees something in me that I cannot
- f. We are loved with an everlasting love, touched by magnificent compassion, and have kindness that reached us so that we can hold onto the certainty of eternity in the presence of our Lord

XI. Last Thought

- a. Psalm 145:13 (CSB)  
Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your rule is for all generations. The LORD is faithful in all his words and gracious in all his actions.

- b. He is faithful to all – always, He encourages us and is just, and His actions are satisfying
- c. Let's pray
- d. May the goodness of God touch you in the moments when it seems that He is distant. May His grace flow through you to touch all those around you. And may His love comfort you in every step you take.