

**COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE****To the Praise of His Glory**

EPHESIANS 1:11-14

**OVERVIEW**

Everything—literally everything—in heaven and on earth is being united in Christ (1:10). Only when we understand who Christ is can we begin to understand who we are. We often read Paul’s letters thinking about all Scripture calls us to do. But before Ephesians calls us to do anything, it reminds us what God has done in Christ.

Our identity is not based on what we do, but who we are. Our identity is not earned and achieved but declared and received. Our identity, as Christians, is found “in Christ.” We are united to Christ—and that changes everything about us! Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus explains what we were (apart from Christ), who we are (in Christ), and then how we should live as followers of Christ, all for the glory of Christ.

**APPLY // EPHESIANS 1:7-10**

1. Read Ephesians 1:1-10.
2. What encourages you most to know that “In him [Christ Jesus] we have redemption”? Notice the verb is present tense, active.
3. How would you use this truth to help someone who is struggling with the guilt and shame of a particular sin they have committed?
4. How would you use the doctrine of redemption to minister to a person who is struggling with offenses committed against them leaving them feeling unworthy to receive redemption?
5. How does the phrase “according to the riches of his grace which he lavished on us” help us treasure Christ?
6. Verse 10 tells us that in the fullness of time, all things will be united in Christ. How does this truth help us navigate present day difficulties and uncertainties? How can we increasingly cultivate a yearning for and hope in the uniting of all things?

**STUDY // EPHESIANS 1:11-14**

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

1. Read Ephesians 1:1-14.
2. What are the first two words of verse 11 (and in verses 12 and 13)? Why is it important to not skip these words?

3. Notice that Paul says, “we have obtained an inheritance” which is past tense. How are we supposed to interpret Paul’s words since we don’t yet fully possess our inheritance (cf. v. 14)?
  4. In verse 11 and 14 Paul references our “inheritance” that we have in Christ. What does Paul have in mind when he refers to our “inheritance”? (cf. 1 Peter 1:3-5)
  5. Notice the repetition of “according to” in verse 11 (see also verse 5, 7, 9). How does this phrase inform our understanding of all that God is doing in Christ?
  6. According to verse 12 and 13, what response has Paul seen in the Ephesians toward Christ and the gospel?
  7. Why is it significant that Paul says they “*heard* the word of truth”? (cf. Romans 10:14-17)
  8. What is the “word of truth, the gospel of your salvation”?
  9. What does it mean to be “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit”? Notice the verb tense of “sealed.” Why does it matter this is in the past tense?
    - a. See also Ephesians 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 5:5
  10. What does it mean the Spirit is our “guarantee of our inheritance?”
  11. Notice the phrase “to the praise of his glory” in verse 12 and 14 (see also verse 6). What does this mean? How does this phrase inform our understanding of all that Paul has written in this opening prayer?
- General Bible study questions:
    - **God:** What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
    - **Humanity:** What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
    - **Christ:** How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
    - **Response:** How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

**QUESTION:** In what areas of your life do you need to apply God’s redemption in Christ?