

EPHESIANS SERIES

'IN CHRIST JESUS'

Session One

Introduction

The phrase 'in Christ Jesus', is frequently used by Paul, especially in the book of Ephesians. It is used eleven times in verses 1-14 of chapter one alone.

Christians not only have faith in Him; their life is in Him. "As the root in the soil, the branches in the vine, fish in the sea, the bird in the air, so the place of the Christian's life is in Christ." (Francis Foulkes, 1983 Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Ephesians)

To be 'in Christ' is to be in relationship with Christ.

Ephesians 1:3-14

- All one sentence in the Greek
- An amazingly rich 'sentence'
- Details the blessings we receive from the Father (v 3), Son (vs 4-13a) and Holy Spirit (vs 13b-14).

Ephesians 1:3

- 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.

These spiritual blessings are listed in the following eleven verses.

During the series we will focus on:

1. Chosen: Ephesians 1:4
2. Holy and Blameless: Ephesians 1:4
3. Adopted: Ephesians 1:5
4. Redemption: Ephesians 1:7
5. Forgiveness: Ephesians 1:7

1. CHOSEN

Ephesians 1:4

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world...

John 15:16

You did not choose me but I chose you...

'balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility'

God always takes the initiative. Romans 5:8, Luke 15:20 (Forgiving Father). His choosing is an act of grace.

Note: 'Election' is a blessing. Without it no-one could be saved. God's nature is to seek and save. 2 Peter 3:9

For further insight into 'election' read J.I. Packer 'God's Words' Chapter 13.

2. HOLY AND BLAMELESS

Ephesians 1:4...to be holy and blameless in his sight.

The goal of being chosen (election) is not just to salvation but to holiness of life. Matthew 5:48

Need to understand holiness and sanctification.
Isaiah 6: 1-7 – God's holiness

Called to live holy lives. John 17:14-16 (in the world, not of the world)
- to be both detached and involved.

Sanctification has two aspects:-

- a. Have been sanctified (positional)
1 Corinthians 6:11 ...you were sanctified
Colossians 3:3 You died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God

Note: Romans 1:7...To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints...
c.f. Philippians 1:1...to all the saints in Christ Jesus...

Who are the saints?
...not the elite, the super spirituals,
No...those who are in Christ Jesus

- b. Progressive sanctification (relational)
1 Thessalonians 5:23
2 Corinthians 3:18

'God calls for our co-operation as he 'works in us to will and to act according to his good purpose'. Philippians 2:13