

Who Are You? Saint or Sinner?

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Preacher: BK Smith

[0 : 0 0] be seated. Before I get into today's sermon, if you guys have a look in your bulletin, there's this section that we're kind of talking about recommended resources. These are different resources that we're going to put in there for a couple of weeks at a time, just to call your attention to some amazing Christian resources that exist out in evangelicalism that we hope and pray would be a blessing to you. I know there's a lot of those different websites I go to for a time to read some different Christian articles, both for encouragement, for comfort, and to learn, obviously. So I would encourage you to take an opportunity. And what we feature in there is also going to be featured on our website. Now today I want to make special mention, today you guys have the CCEF, that is the Christian Council or, I don't know, Evangelical Foundation, I think, right? There's another C. What is it, Dave? There we go. All right. Now it's kind of interesting that

Dave has talked about it because what we've kind of seen as elders here is Dave, and I think a lot of you guys know, Dave's got a passion for biblical counseling. This is, I believe, a really gifting for him. He really likes doing it a lot. He's thinking in certain terms. So one of the things that we've encouraged him to do is to pursue accreditation and more education. So this is the group that Dave has researched, put some time in, and this is where he's going to be taking some classes. And hopefully after he gets accredited, this is teaching that he's going to be able to bring to us, whether it be in the journey or other different options of our class, hopefully growing our knowledge and in the faith of Jesus Christ. Great things, right? So I would encourage you to please add Dave to your prayer list in regards to that. As he reaches out, he's going to need more study and eventually accreditation just as we beef up our biblical counseling program here at SBC.

All right. We are now beginning a study of Ephesians. So please turn with me in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1 is where we are going to be today.

Okay. I thought I would share something with you guys. When I was in university, like any other student, I had to grab a summer job in order to pay for my tuition. And one summer, I had this really great yet interesting, challenging job at the same time. And the job was working in a youth home, youth center. And essentially it was for kids that were removed from their home because of abusive situations or kids coming out of a juvenile detention type of home. They would come into this house and I would kind of act as a father, big brother figure and do programming during the summertime with them. Very interesting time. And even now there was certain kids that stand out to me. I still think about them. Some very interesting kids. And there was one kid in particular in his situation that I'm always mindful of. And just for sake of anonymity, I'll call him Marty. All right. I'll call him Marty. Marty. And a big reason I'm going to call him Marty is that he had a thing for food. He had a thing for food. It's no correlation to any Marty you might know, right? Or just picking a name out. But this kid was pretty engaging. He was polite. He was a great athlete. He was fun to have in the group. And he tended to think of others in the group. But one of the issues that he had is he liked food so much he would steal it. No matter where we went, we took him to a science center. There would be food stolen. Whether it be an arts place or a sports event, he would always be stealing food. In fact, in the group home that we had, we had to put a lock on the pantry because he would go in and steal food from the house that he lives in, right? And one of the reasons we found out about his desire to steal is that he wouldn't steal the food to eat per se. He would steal the food to keep in case he had no food.

[5 : 1 9] So obviously, we started noticing there's mice in the upstairs where Marty lived. There was always the smell of rotting food. And we'd have to go over. And I remember sitting down with him and saying to him, you know, Marty, we have more than enough food. All you have to do is come and ask me. I'll prepare a snack for you. Our meals are set. There's never going to be a time that we're not going to have enough food. And he would be very polite. He'd say he understood. But

sure enough, there'd be a mice issue in his room once again. And he just didn't get it. Well, what I soon learned about Marty is that he was originally from Brazil. And he and his brother were adopted by a fairly wealthy Christian family where I was going to school. And what I learned is the way they did things in the orphanage with the kids in Brazil was they would basically just pitch all the food into the middle of the room.

And some days you were able to get some. Some days you weren't able to get some. So the days that you were able to get more than enough food, guess what you did? You hoarded it, right? You hid it from the other kids so you would know that there was enough food for you tomorrow. So here was this kid Marty in a culture where there really isn't any food shortage. All he had to do was ask to snack. But he was always worried that he wouldn't get enough food for the next day. What's even more tragic is I knew the family that adopted him. They were exceptionally wealthy, had a huge horse farm. But he kept always stealing food and they did not know how to handle him. And thus, sadly, he went into the system. It is my experience that there's a lot of people who exist in the church who are like Marty. They come from a life of spiritual deadness, poverty, and neglect. And now that they are saved, they have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, still live a life that exists in spiritual deadness, spiritual poverty, and spiritual neglect. They have just not come to understand that they have been adopted into a new kingdom that is full of riches and the most wonderful, bountiful, nutritious food that you could ever have. That they do not know or understand what it is that they have in Jesus Christ. Most of these people consider Jesus as a friend, someone I reach out to during times of trouble or trauma. He's an emotional support. But most often, he's that fire insurance, right? I don't want to go to hell. So I'm going to become a Christian.

[8 : 37] I'm going to come to church. I'm going to do these certain things. But I'm really not going to go beyond the faith that led me to the gospel. Now, most of these people acknowledge that there's this other group of Christians. They're called the super Christians, right? And these super Christians are the ones that tend to do more study and they live a different type of life. But sometimes you may think the reason they're like that is I didn't come from that kind of family. I don't have that right background. Or no one really taught me more about these riches.

You acknowledge that life is tough. You get it. But you feel like you are simply living this life out on your own steam as opposed to being fed. Feel like you are being led by the Spirit. It's like you have an iPhone and the only thing you do with it is make calls. And it's yet far more powerful than that in a paperweight. Well, I've got good news for you. In fact, I would say great news. The letter, this journey, which we are about to embark on through the book of Ephesians, deals with exactly this issue. It is Paul unfurling for us how great God is, the God of our salvation, and the implications this has for Christians in living the Christian life. In fact, Ephesians is considered by most to be the most contemporary book of the Bible. Except for the fact that it mentions slavery, we could believe that this was the letter written to Squamish Baptist Church. It's that incredible and it is that contemporary. This is a letter that is all about a new life in Christ. It is about living together this new life in Christ.

It actually outlines a total new way of living contrasted with the old way of living without Jesus. But I'm going to tell you what's so great about this letter. It's not because it's a great how-to letter. It's actually about how great God is letter. A lot of times we want the how-to, give me the 10 steps to make me a better parent, or give me the five steps to be a better loving husband or wife. Paul doesn't even bother with that. He's saying the fuel that you need in your car for this Christian life comes in understanding God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. And through that understanding, you will be able to bear fruit keeping with faith. Its beauty and its strength is found in understanding what it truly means to belong to God and what all his riches have for you.

It is about what God does for us. It is about what God does in us and is about what God does through us.

So turn to your Bibles. We're going to dig in. But before I do, I just want to pray. I want to pray for God's blessing. I want to pray for God's wisdom. And I want to pray for God's understanding.

[12 : 33] I love this letter. And my heart's desire is that you would come to love it too, not because it's a letter, but it just points us to an incredible, all-powerful, all-graceful, all-loving God.

Dear, holy, heavenly, amazing God, we just thank you for this opportunity that we have this letter to study. I pray that it would fill us with your wisdom, your understanding. I pray that we would see both the love of God, the work of Christ, and the power of Holy Spirit working through this also in our lives. Father, you did not lead us blindly. You didn't save us from a kingdom of darkness and put

us in another kingdom of darkness. In fact, you took us from a kingdom of darkness and put us in the kingdom of light. So Father, we're asking that light to shine on your word, to shine in our own hearts and our own lives so that we would truly understand and live the incredible message that we see in this book. We ask these things in your most powerful and incredible, gracious, and loving name.

Amen. All right, let's go to the text. Verse 1 starts off very simple. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus. And he gives us this very standard greeting in verse 2. It says, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's actually going to tie in to a theme that exists throughout Ephesians. And it is the life of Gentiles who've just recently come to the knowledge and saving faith of Jesus Christ. And it's going to be bringing the Jews that are together that live in the same city. And they're going to have to learn to live in unity with one another. So one of the themes that we're going to see throughout this letter is this theme of unity and this theme of fellowship. So when it says grace to you and peace from God, he's actually combining both Christian and Jewish elements. Grace from the new covenant and peace, shalom, from the old covenant as they're combined as one under God. Now we want to go back to the first verse. It simply says, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God to the saints of Ephesians. It's pretty standard, right? It tells us, one, who wrote the book, two, who was written to.

In fact, that seems so straightforward that it seems ridiculous to talk about what I'm going to talk about for this little section. But for 1900 years, this is what the church has always believed. And I have to mention this because I know some of you guys have asked me about this. If you read a commentary, three questions come up. One, did Paul really write this letter? And two, was it really written to the people in Ephesus? And three, because of those two issues, do we understand and know what the purpose of the letter is? I'm going to break down what are the essential arguments that people believe these things? Because we see it so clearly. Am I not right? If you took a test, who wrote it? You'd all say Paul. Who is it written to? It's pretty simple, right? But there's four arguments that essentially come up. One, it's an impersonal letter compared to the rest of Paul's letters. There's no specific name except for Tychicus that's mentioned at the end. Most of the Pauline letters, he tends to write a little bit about what's going on. There's this personal touch that's added. And scholars think, well, this is kind of odd because Ephesus is a very important church to Paul. He actually visited it several times. In fact, on one of his missionary journeys, he stayed there and pastored the church for three years. All right? So he got to know the people. And in fact, 1 Timothy is a letter written to Timothy who was pastoring in the church of Ephesus at the time. So he's got a very special connection to these people. And scholars are wondering, well, why isn't he a little bit more friendly? The second reason is there's a different language and style that we see in this letter compared to the others. They argue that, in fact, the letter is, they say there's a different language and style.

[17 : 23] At the same time, the letter is too similar to Colossians. So they feel that someone copied part of it to turn it into this letter. And there's a differing theological emphasis that is here.

Now, in regard to the letter not being to the church at Ephesus, the reason people believe this is that, I don't know if you know, that there's actually 5,000 different manuscripts that we have of the New Testament. All right? 5,000 all talking about it, but there's five of these manuscripts do not have the words to the church in Ephesus. It just says to the saints. And it's kind of blank. So scholars have been led to think that maybe this was a circular letter that Paul wanted to write. So he'd give it to his messenger. So when you would take it to the other church, you could write in who that church's name was, right? So, all right, we're in Laodicea. So we're going to write to the church in Laodicea. So it's kind of like a carbon copy of the same letter going to all these different churches. All right. Now, why five manuscripts versus 5,000?

Because these five manuscripts happen to be what they consider five of the most reliable, oldest manuscripts, which have led them to think this way. All right? Now, you're going to ask, why is this important? As far as Ephesus is concerned, whether it was written to Ephesus or not, that is not the same issue as if Paul didn't write about it. See, what happens is if Paul didn't write about it, write this letter, we're robbed of its authority. Because as you see in the first part, it was written by Paul by the will of God, an apostle, right? An official sender. So a lot of people have speculated that it was a friend of Paul's or someone who knew Paul who wanted to give this, these were kind of Paul's words. And I'm just going to put Paul's name on it because, you know, you're going to

respect it if you got the letter from BK, whatever, right? But Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, you're going to pay attention to that guy's words. Well, I want to give you some of the facts here. I do believe the letter is written by Paul and to the church of Ephesus. And it is what the clear majority of evangelical scholars do as well. All right? This isn't that largely debated. One of the facts is Ephesians is true. It's a very distinctive, different letter. And one of the big reasons for this, it doesn't address specific questions that we see. If you get into 1 Corinthians, you understand Paul's writings, you know he's been asked questions and he's writing to respond to questions. We don't have that with the letter to Ephesians. It's not that kind of letter, which I believe lays to its different style and distinctiveness. It's kind of like when I applied to this pastor position here, you know, I wrote the elders, dear elders of the most esteemed church in Squamish, you know, now I just refer to them, hey, yo dudes, what's going on? Right?

[20 : 55] You know, there's a different kind of connection. We write different letters. We use different vernacular type of sayings. Now, when people say there's an impersonal letter, Paul does write differently. In fact, it says people believe he doesn't know. I believe he doesn't know everybody he's writing to because if you notice in Ephesians 1 15, it says that he hears about their faith rather than having first-hand knowledge. Well, the fact of the matter is this letter is written in 60 to 62.

It's been some years since the church visited. And you know what happens to loving, faithful churches? They grow. They multiply. So Paul, who's planning it, spending that time since he's left, guess what?

The people have been faithful with the gospel and have gone out and people are being saved more and more. In fact, at first it would have started out as a house church, but it's not like it's written to Squamish Baptist Church. This would have been a letter written to the churches who exist in Squamish.

So Paul's letter just wouldn't have been to us. It would have been to all the different churches in Squamish. That's what this type of letter is. All right? So he's going to write it a little bit differently and he's going to be getting reports of what's going on. Now, as far as that being a circular letter, I believe that could be true, but there has been no finding of any other manuscript with any other name of any other church on it. Okay? When they say, well, maybe there was a blank left. There's actually no evidence of any manuscript having any other church name. It's either a few of them don't have Ephesians, 5,000 have Ephesians. My contention is that not only was it meant for the church of Ephesus, but Paul understood and knew that that letter would go out because we're talking about foundational aspects of the faith that he would want to address to all these churches across

Eastern Asia. The fact of the matter is Ephesus is a major city. Historians believe there was at least a population of over a quarter of a million people and it was consistently growing. It was the third largest church or third largest city in the Roman Empire. And in fact, the Christian faith made such an impact in this city that in Ephesus was what they called the seventh wonder of the world. It was a temple, which was the temple of the temple of Diana or Artemis, whether you have a Greek or Roman understanding. And they used to build these silver souvenirs, right? And so many people got saved that they quit buying these silver souvenirs.

[24 : 05] And the silversmiths actually got so upset, they started to get mob rule against the Christians who were teaching truth rather than their false religion because it was impacting their economy so much, right? So would Paul know everybody at that time? Of course not. And we understand this to be evidence of the incredible growth and power of the gospel in this large city. In fact, when you read Revelations chapter 3, if you remember, John writes 10 churches, guess where they all came from?

Ephesus. Ephesus was the launching point of all those churches. So what we're looking at is a major city with a major church influence. And as far as it being similar to Colossians, it was actually written at the same time between the time of 60, 62 AD by Paul in prison. I don't know about you. You ever said, you know what, I'm going to knock off a few letters to people? And you start writing it out. Then that next letter is kind of similar to the first letter, right? Because you have those same kind of thoughts on your mind. I think it's very natural that there would be some themes that he wants to cover in Colossians that he talks about in Ephesians. But the strongest evidence that I believe that Paul is the author and it's written to the church of Ephesus is because the early church fathers and teachers who existed, we have writings in 90 AD within the same lifespan. When

they wrote about the letter, guess what they said? Paul was the author and it was written to the church at Ephesus.

Nobody says anything else. So because of this, this answers the question that I've already talked about. This has to do with the authority that Paul is writing. It's important for us to understand this authority. He writes it as an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. If it's not by Paul, it is not divine. Now I want you to notice it's by the divine initiative. An apostle is one who is sent out specifically with the message by the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not something that Paul thought up on himself. It's not something he imagined. It's not something he devised. It's not something that is the will of man, but it is the will of God. What's amazing about Paul is his name was originally Saul. Paul. And he actually was an enemy of the church and he detested the church. And in fact, Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin. He was a Jew who received some of the most extensive training you could at that time. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, which was one of the most preeminent religious ruling councils in Jerusalem. He was a Jew who hated Christians, was an outspoken enemy. And in fact, he's on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians. Guess what happened? That is the day the Lord Jesus Christ came into his life through a blinding light, blinded him. And Jesus Christ simply said, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? In there, we see one of the first identifications that Jesus basically identifies himself as the church. You persecute the church, you persecute me. So Paul, Jesus used that physical blindness to reveal Paul's spiritual blindness. He led into some Christians and after spending three years in the desert, he begins to serve at a church in Antioch, where God then sends him on these missionary journeys, where he plants churches and he writes these letters. So that is Paul. That is the author, I believe, to the people is who I want to focus this letter on right now. We know that this letter is written to Christians in Ephesus, but I need you to pay attention to the special words that Paul uses to identify the Christians. Let's take a look. Second half of verse one. To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus. If you're familiar with D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, one of the greatest preachers of the 20th century, he would go on to say that these are three definitions for a Christian. One, Christians are saints. Two, Christians are faithful. And three, Christians are in Christ. And today, I want to flush out the meanings of those three words. Let's look at Christians are saints. Last week, I asked you, who are you?

[29 : 50] Right? I challenge you, how do you think of yourself? And I talk about James and how some of the early Christian writers identified themselves as slaves to Jesus Christ. Now, I want to ask you another question that I asked you similar last week. Do you consider yourself more a saint or a sinner? How do you think of yourself more as a saint or as a sinner? If I am right in my experience and in observations, you probably refer to yourself more as a sinner. You refer to yourself more as a sinner than you do a saint. Right? In fact, I took up a very scientific study of this this week. And I asked one person what they thought and they agreed.

Right? Let me share something with you. Did you know that nowhere in the New Testament, and I mean nowhere, is a Christian ever referred to as a sinner? Do you know that? You cannot find one verse where a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, where any author of any letter is called a sinner? Not one. But you know what you are called dozens and dozens of times over? Saint. Saints. You are called as a believer in Jesus Christ. Saints. Dozens and dozens of times.

Think about the implications of that. For the understanding of your identity. Of who you are. Now, if you are Catholic or come from a Catholic background, you are thinking, BK, you are crazy.

[32 : 06] You are crazy right now. Because my understanding of a saint is the Roman Catholic view, which where you are more apt to hear the term that a saint is a particularly holy person who has been exalted because they have done something incredible as well as a single miracle. Right?

That is what you have normally heard. If you are not Catholic, you probably use the term to describe a particularly nice person. Right?

One thing is true. All grandmothers are saints. Right? It's one thing we are told as a pastor. Never say anything negative about a grandmother. Right? Because everyone acknowledges that a grandmother is a saint.

It's just someone that we feel is someone really nice. But the biblical testimony of a saint is quite different.

To be a saint means to be set apart for a specific purpose. To be set apart for a specific purpose. Now, get this.

[33 : 16] It's not something you do to set yourself apart. It's something God does to set yourself apart. It is God setting you apart for something that He is going to do in you, with you, and through you.

You got that? That's what a saint is. It's not something you attain through good works, giving money, or with your own merit.

It's something that God does. Last couple years, David was preaching on Exodus. And I'm sure while he was going through there, he would have touched on the tabernacle.

Remember the tabernacle? I'm sure he referred to it. And we learned that Moses was instructed to sanctify the altar of the Jewish tabernacle.

He was essentially calling to make it a saint. And what it means is he wasn't changing its nature or what it is materially, but he was changing its focus so that it would be holy.

[34 : 25] And what it was doing, it was being set aside for special sacred temple service, which was once holy. When he blesses it or changes it into what's called saint or sanctifies it, nothing physically changes, but it's now used for something completely different.

It's likewise in John 17, 19, Jesus says, and for their sake, he says, I consecrate myself. This is Jesus Christ high priestly prayer, right?

This is before he's going to be crucified. He's in the Garden of Gethsemane and we read this incredible heartfelt prayer. And he says, for their sake, he goes, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth.

Another word for consecrate is sanctify. Right? That word, Jesus wasn't saying to God, I'm becoming more holier because Jesus was already perfectly holy.

Amen? So he's not saying, I'm going to become more holier, but what he was is he was dedicating himself to a task of making atonement for our sins on the cross and he was set apart by God to do it.

[35 : 41] That's what he's saying. How do you become a saint? You become a saint when God reaches down through the person and work of the Holy Spirit and regenerates us and draws us into the company of God's church.

If you are a Christian and you are a believer in Jesus Christ, guess what? You are a saint. You have been set apart for something special.

Every Christian is a saint and every saint is a Christian. What does that mean? It means we no longer belong to the world.

The world has no say on us. Our citizenship is now in heaven. We have a new king, not this dirty king on this world.

We have a new nature. What we desire is vastly different than what we used to desire. and we have a new set of loyalties which gives us a new agenda.

[36 : 50] And as we will learn in Ephesians, one of the purposes as a saint or a Christian is to do good works. So good works doesn't make one a saint.

But because you're a saint and you have the power of the indwelling spirit, your desire is to do good works for Jesus Christ. Amen? Because that's our nature.

That is what the Holy Spirit has to produce. So the second element of being a Christian that Paul states here, first he calls them saints, then he says the Christians who are faithful.

He calls faithful in Christ Jesus. And by faithful he means two things. There's two things. There's one, we act in faith to something and to say, to acting in faith to become a Christian.

The first thing is what's called an intellectual assent. And what I mean is by assent is to understand or to confirm. The fact of the matter is faith involves content.

[37 : 56] Do you know that? We believe something. I hate reading people say you got to be a Christian means you need to accept the unexplainable. No, no, no.

Our faith is actually believed on a historical reality that Jesus Christ died on the cross. And in fact he died for our sins.

This is a fact. The Bible teaches that we are sinners separated from God. We don't need to scientifically do a study to see if we're sinful, do we?

I love this story. my friend, his sister, she's kind of this bohemian flower child kind of person and she marries this guy and there's no such thing as sin.

Well, guess what? As soon as they had their kids, they fully came on board that there is sin in this world. Right? They see in their little child who can't talk, but they see a child who has a will of its

own that wants to disobey their parents.

[39 : 05] Right? Reality. We know it. We know our struggles. So what happens is we have to understand our faith in order for it to be a part of our lives.

So that means there's a foundation of teaching. It's not an emotion. Okay? And I'm going to talk about emotion in a second. It means that we believe that God is holy.

we believe that we are sinful through Adam and through our own actions. It means we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who lived a perfect life, who died on the cross to save us from our sins.

See, so there's that faithful means we have to intellectually understand this. Now the second part of being faithful is there an emotional element to salvation.

There is an emotional element. When you truly understand the gospel, that you were once a sinner, an enemy of God, that you were destined to eternal torment, that God sent His Son to die on the cross for you, if that doesn't move you emotionally, you might not understand everything.

[40 : 33] So by being faithful, there's an emotional understanding that I caused someone to die. And the third part of being faithful is the volitional element.

God, it's I'm now committing my life to that truth which has emotionally moved me to become a follower of Jesus.

So when Paul's saying the faithful, they intellectually understand the gospel, they're emotionally moved by the gospel, and their will is for God, for the things of God, and for Christianity, the church, right?

The perfect example is in John 20, 28. Remember, Thomas doubted. There's a great story. I might preach a sermon on Thomas.

He's an incredible character of the Bible. A lot of people call him Doubting Thomas. I believe Thomas probably loved Jesus more than anybody else other than John, that he had a deep, and when Jesus died on the cross, he took off.

[41 : 45] He was so ravishly hurt. And Jesus does something special for Thomas. Lifts up the side. See my scar. And as soon as Thomas touches that scar, what does he say?

My Lord and my God. He's all in. He's all in. And that's what we're talking about when we execute our will.

We are all in. My Lord and my God. God. The third element. So we see that we are identified as a saint.

We see that we are identified as faithful. But there's this great third word that identifies a Christian. And it is Christians are in Christ.

That word in Christ is used nowhere else. You don't say I am in Moses or I am in Peter. You say I am in Christ.

[42 : 49] And in fact, I would argue that this is one of Paul's the most major theme in all his writings. A lot of people believe that it's justification by faith is Paul's greatest theological talk.

I believe it's union in Christ. Why? Because he talks about it in every single letter. In fact, the passage that Carl wrote to us, it appears nine times either in Christ or in him in the first 23 verses. Paul mentions this 160 more times in his letters. The phrase means so much more than simply believing in Jesus Christ and being saved.

This is what it means. When he says in Christ, he's saying it means being joined to Jesus in one spiritual body so that what is true in him is true also in you.

I'm going to read that again. My friends, this is a profound truth that changes lives in a minute when you can grasp the importance of this.

[44 : 01] It means being joined to Jesus in one spiritual body so that what is true in him is also true in you.

Think about that this week. Ponder upon those words. Paul will later tell us in Ephesians 2.6, by grace you have been saved and raised us up with him and with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Jesus. Let's take a look at verse 3 now of Ephesians 1. Verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who what?

Has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. This is our call. If you are a Christian, you are a saint, you are faithful, you are in Christ.

These are the riches that you have available to you. Without Jesus, our condition is absolutely hopeless.

[45 : 20] But if you are in Christ, your condition is wonderfully glorious. one of the most well-known Christian preachers or one well-known Christian preacher simply states that this seems to be one of the most overlooked and misunderstood truths of the Christian life to be in union with him and what that means for us.

My hope, my prayer, as we deepen our understanding of God through Ephesians that we would come to understand this truth of what it really means to be blessed in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

not only as individuals but as a community of committed believers.

Thanks. We will read there are clear implications for us. Next week, your assignment if you choose to accept it is I want you to spend time in verses 3 to 13 every day.

Read it. I'm going to tell you why. Let's take a look at verse 3. It says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the holy places.

[47 : 09] And it says, even as he chose us in him, we're actually going to dig in that word as in is because he chose us.

So now we are actually going to be understanding and spending some time understanding God and how he chose us and the wonderful implications that has for our lives.

So before we understand the how to what for Paul brilliantly lays out Ephesians first three chapters are all about God and the second three chapters are the implications of what it means to be in Christ for our lives.

So my prayer is that you will become experts in this letter. You will know this. You will be profoundly affected and just for your information verse 3 to 13 in the Greek is one sentence.

A lot of words. They actually believe it's a hymn or a eulogy. Paul so excited about the truths of God he's got to sing about them to these people.

[48 : 24] My heart my prayer is that you would do so as well. Please pray with me.