

Discovery Group - Ephesians

For the Praise of His Glory

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Ephesians 1:1-23

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- Consider these descriptions of what Jesus has done for you: Why is it important to be convinced of these things? Why does Paul launch into prayer for revelation in this context?
- How will a stronger revelation of Jesus enable you to fulfill His calling on your life?
- Are there ways in which your perception of Jesus has been insufficient? Too small? In what ways do you need to grow in your revelation and knowledge of Jesus? How can you overcome doubts that arise?

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read Ephesians 2-3 this week.

Spend time meditating on 2:8-10 and 3:6-13

Praise of His Glory

The book of Ephesians is all about God's surprisingly magnificent purpose for the Church, and how it fits into His plan for the world. It is a vision-casting letter for the people of God to understand their purpose so that they will live up to it by doing good works, living holy lives, and re-imagining their key relationships. Paul prefaces all of this with a call to look at Jesus and consider all He has done through His amazing grace. Through Jesus, God has:

- * Blessed us with every spiritual blessing
- * Chosen us to be holy and blameless
- * Destined us for adoption to sonship because of His great love (Note the emphasis that He did this because He wanted to, leading to His grace being magnified)
- * Redeemed us by forgiving our sins (again, through lavishing grace on us)
- * Revealed to us the mystery of His will with all wisdom and understanding
 - (That mystery is that His will is to bring unity to all things under Christ)
- * Chosen and included both Jews and Gentiles in Jesus (for the praise of His glory)
- * Marked us with a seal - the Holy Spirit (which is a deposit guaranteeing our redemption) - to the praise of His glory!

This eruption of praise with which Paul begins the letter flows into a passionate and strategic prayer. In the prayer, he makes two basic requests, further revealing his heart for God's people. The first request is that we would have a spirit of wisdom and revelation *that we might know God better*. The second is that our hearts would be enlightened, so that we would know three things: the *hope* to which we are called; the *riches of our inheritance*; and *His great power* for us.

Knowing that in the following chapters he will present a shockingly high and grand purpose for us - God's ordinary redeemed people - he prays for a deeper revelation of God Himself and all He has done for us and promised us. In doing so, He continues to exalt Jesus and reveal His majesty and greatness. He ends with an introductory statement about the church that will be filled out in the coming sections: The church is the body of Jesus, "the fullness of him who fills everything in every way." How can the church be the fullness of Jesus? This will be addressed throughout the rest of the letter.

For now, all this should lead us to be in greater and greater awe of Jesus. Having our eyes fixed on Jesus is the only way we will fulfill His destiny for us.