

(1) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be whole and blameless before Him.

(5) In love He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.

(7) In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace --- which He lavished upon us --- in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time --- to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth.

(11) In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory.

(13) In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth --- the gospel of your salvation --- and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory!

Think on these things:

- 1) God, our heavenly Father, has blessed us with how many spiritual blessings in heaven through Christ Jesus (v.3)?

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- 2) V.4 is an important discussion on God's "omniscience" and the doctrine of "predestination." Both are essential to understanding God. When did God choose us to be whole and blameless? This was "pre-determined" (predestination).

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- 3) Continuing to look at v.4, let's examine the doctrine of omniscience. Can you explain what this means? What did God know about you and Jesus before you were ever born into this world?

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- 4) Which do you believe: God chose you to be saved before you were born, or God chose to save you because He knew you would put your faith in Jesus for salvation? Why does it matter?

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5) According to v.5, what else did God predestine for us?

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6) Beginning in v.7, there are three "In Him..." teachings. What are these? In Him we have...

v.7 \_\_\_\_\_

v.11 \_\_\_\_\_

v.13 \_\_\_\_\_

7) What are we told about God's "grace" for believers in v.8? Grace is undeserved favor.

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8) According to vs. 9-10, what mystery has God revealed, His purpose as set forth in Jesus Christ?

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9) When you skim again verses 5-12, do you get the sense that God is orchestrating the affairs of men across time towards a plan He has in mind? What phrases would support that?

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10) What do you think being "sealed" with the Holy Spirit means? Consider 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 and Revelations 7:2-3. Sealing can mean 1 of 2 things, and it was a common practice of royalty and government leaders. (Remember Pilate sealed Jesus' tomb, Matthew 27:62-66.)

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11) What other purpose is explained by the Holy Spirit's presence in the believer's life? This is a financial term, similar to a down payment in today's conversations. What is the "payoff?"

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12) Are you aware of the Holy Spirit's presence in your life...?

People and situations I want to pray for this week: