



Introduction to Ephesians 1:11-14 Sunday, October 1, 2017
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It's popular to try to characterize people into different groups. Some might say there are "four personality types" or there are "three kinds of people" in a given set of circumstances. In the most fundamental reality about our existence, however, there are truly only two kinds of people in the world: those who are in Christ and those who are outside of Christ. Everything else that could possibly unite or divide us is subservient to this truth.

We can often deceive ourselves into thinking that we are in closer alignment with members of our chosen political party or fellow fans of our favorite sports teams. Perhaps in a more serious way, we can think that we have closer ties to people of our race or our nationality. In the grand scheme of things, though, what matters most is whether the people we come into contact with are in Christ or outside of Christ. What organization in the world is as diverse as the Church? We ought to praise God for His glorious grace—not only in saving us and bringing us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His Son, but that He has brought others into that kingdom with us as well.

Context

Ephesians 1:11-14 concludes the long, gushing statement of praise that begins the letter. For Paul, this concluding thought will flesh out even further what he has referred to in verses 9-10. There he described all things in heaven and on earth being united in Christ (v. 10). Here, in verse 11, he continues by highlighting the fact that the Jews—who were once set apart from every other nation—have now been joined together with people from other nations by their mutual inclusion in Christ—through faith in the gospel and the seal of the Holy Spirit. This sets up what Paul will discuss further in chapter 2:11-22 and chapter 4:1-16.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

“Included in Christ”

Read Ephesians 1:11-14

Ephesians 1.3-14

- Poem of Praise
- 3x “to the praise of His glory.”
- Deals with Past, Present, Future
- Trinitarian Nature

Excluded 2.12

- Separate from God’s Son
- Omitted from God’s People
- Strangers to God’s Promises
- Result: We are without hope... w/o God

Included... How? 1.13-14

- Hearing
- Believing
- Sealing
- Result: We are God’s possession and all His riches belong to us.

Sinclair Ferguson: “God’s glory is not the enemy of our good.”

Discuss

- 1) Have you ever been a part of a group where you felt like the “outsider”? What was that like?
- 2) What is life like for people “outside of Christ”?
- 3) When was the first time you heard the gospel clearly? Had you “heard” it before? What about your view of God changed?
- 4) How do you view people who are “outside of Christ”?
- 5) This passage twice echoes the purpose statement of God’s activity: everything He does is done so that His glory would be praised. What does it look like for you to praise God’s glory in day-to-day life?