

# EPHESIANS

## Bible Study 1:1-14

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. **The answers will be in bold print at the end of the “questions” section.**

Introduction – 1:1-2

In verse 1 it states that Paul was an apostle of Christ Jesus. That meant that Paul was God’s messenger and sent by God Himself.

1. Why do you think that was so important in this situation?
2. Paul addresses the Ephesians as saints. What is a saint?

Ephesus was the most important city in western Asia Minor (now Turkey). No city in Asia was more famous or more populous. It ranked with Rome, Corinth, Antioch and Alexandria among the foremost urban centers of the empire.

It sheltered the wildest collection of pagan priests, magicians, exorcists, cultists, religious prostitutes, and charlatans in the Roman Empire. Temple of the Roman goddess Diana (Greek *Artemis*) was made of marble. This temple was about four times the size of the Parthenon in Athens.

The group of Christians there was small and probably not very welcome. In fact, when Paul was doing his work in Ephesus there were people who bitterly opposed him and even started a riot and made him ultimately leave. The riot had to do with some businessmen were losing their customers because the believers were no longer patronizing silversmiths who constructed idols. (Acts 19:23-31)

While the above would be enough hurdles, Paul and any new Gentile church always had to face Jewish groups who were known as Judaizers (They were not willing to accept that the Gentiles could be saved by grace alone. They wanted them to also keep Jewish rituals like circumcision.)

3. The Ephesian people had many obstacles to their faith life. What are some obstructions that Christians face in our society?

Spiritual Blessings in Christ – 1:3-14

In verse 3 we hear that the Ephesians had been blessed in “the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing.” These blessings come from where God lives which is a higher world than our earth where we dwell. These are blessings of the Holy Spirit.

With what all the impediments these Christians faced they needed much encouragement. Paul is known for his “nailing down” a point by repetition. That there is what he is doing now with the Ephesians.

4. Find the spiritual blessings listed in verses 4-14. See the great comfort that can be found in these blessings.

V. 4 –

V. 4 –

V. 5 –

V. 5 –

V. 6 –

V. 7 –

V. 7 –

V. 8 –

V. 9 –

V. 10 –

V. 11 –

V. 11 –

V. 11 –

V. 12 –

V. 13 –

V. 13 –

V. 13 –

V. 14 –

5. This is an incredibly comprehensive list. Paul's objective was to overwhelm the Ephesian Christians with comfort and thereby strengthen their faith. Which verses/phrases bring you unparalleled comfort and a strengthening of faith?

#### **Some Answers to the above Questions:**

**1 – Once Paul was converted his friends became his enemies. They did as much as possible to hinder his ministry to the Gentiles. One their most used weapon was to say he was speaking without any authority.**

#### **2. A saint is**

- **Someone who lived a holy and exemplary life and who has since died.**
- **St. Paul uses the word to refer to anyone who places his/her trust and belief in Jesus Christ as Savior.**
- **We become saints through faith in Christ as a result of being called by God through the Gospel.**
- **Here the word is significant because it means “members of the holy community” which was once confined to Israel (2:19) but is now embracing the Gentiles also.**
- **Literally, “holy ones,” as God made them through Holy Baptism**

**3. – There are a number of possibilities that work to erode our faith, but perhaps the most dangerous is the “political correctness” that we face so very often. It is so perilous because it seems so innocent when first suggested. Remember the devil is behind everything that would undermine our faith.**

4 –

V. 4 – Chose – The original means and can mean nothing else than: to select, single out, for Himself.

V. 4 – Holy and Blameless – Holiness is the result because of God' choosing us. Blameless is how God sees us through blood of Christ.

V. 5 – Predestined – The primary point is that as God's chosen we can rest assured that our salvation will not be taken away from us. Predestination is whatever God has done, is doing and still will do for us during our life on earth to bring us to faith in Christ and to preserve us in this faith unto eternal salvation.

V. 5 – Adopted – To be adopted by God is to be reborn into His family, made heirs of His kingdom.

V. 6 – Given us glorious grace – Through the grace of God in Jesus, whose entire work is an expression of the love of God toward us, we become both the objects and the recipients of His love. (Buls)

V. 7 – Redemption – The Ephesians were familiar with the Greco-Roman practice of redemption: Slaves were freed by the payment of a ransom. Similarly, the ransom necessary to free sinners from the bondage of sin and the resulting curse imposed by the law was the death of Christ (called here "his blood"). (CSB)

V. 7 – Forgiveness of sins – Sin is not only cancelled out in terms of guilt, but is actually removed from our lives. Where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation.

V. 8 – Wisdom and understanding – With God's grace comes wisdom and understanding. The wisdom, of which Paul writes, is to know and understand the mysteries of God so that they make sense of life.

V. 9 – Made known the mystery – It is that the Gospel is for the Gentiles as well as the Jew.

V. 10 – Bring all things together under one head, Christ – This was the time of Jesus' ministry to redeem sinners from their sins.

V. 11 – Chosen – ESV has "obtained" which literally means "appointed," "allotted." (TLSB)

V. 11 – AN INHERITANCE (ESV) - The Israelite tribes received the Promised Land as their allotment from God, Christians receive God's kingdom, eternal life, and heaven. As we are God's children, this can be called an inheritance (1:14, 18). (TLSB)

V. 11 – Predestined according to the plan of Him (God) – God's is that all people be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). But people can resist God's salvation. We know (assuredly that out of pure grace, without any merit of our own, we have been elected in Christ to eternal life." (TLSB)

V. 12 – First to hope – Paul writes as a Jewish Christian, one who received the Messiah. (TLSB)

V. 13 – Included in Christ – Paul insists that the Gentiles, who receive Christ through his preaching (v. 13) are united with the Jews in Christ by their common Baptism. (TLSB)

V. 13 – Word of Truth, Gospel of salvation – This means that they have heard the same blessed and received the truth as it is in Jesus, the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified Jesus, just as freely as did the believing Jews, and effects.

V. 13 – Marked with a seal – When we are baptized we are marked with a seal. We belong to God. Through Word and sacrament this faith is resealed until we meet Christ at the end of our time.

**V. 14 – Deposit guaranteeing our inheritance – The Christian’s possession of the Holy Spirit is not only evidence of his present salvation but is also a pledge of his future inheritance—and not only a pledge but also the down payment on that inheritance. (CSB)**

**5 – The answers will vary**