

# EPHESIANS

FULLY ALIVE TO GOD, OTHERS & YOUR TRUE SELF

## WEEK 1 GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PLAN EPHESIANS 1:1

### Introduction

The world we live in is in a state of decay and death. At work behind the systems of this world is a dark underworld of demonic powers. God's plan for this world (and us) is to make it (and us) alive. The letter of Ephesians was most likely circulated to many communities of believers in a region known today as Turkey. The first community of believers to hear this lived in the great city of Ephesus. In this letter, Paul the apostle explains the good news of how God would overthrow the stronghold of demonic forces and redeem and restore all things by bringing together a renewed people (Jew and Gentile) into one family. This new family, "the Church", is God's strategy to demonstrate to a dead and decaying world what true life could look like under Yahweh's rule.

### Observation/Interpretation

Read Philippians 3:4-8, Acts 7:59-8:3, Acts 9:1-5 and Ephesians 1:1 aloud.

Prior to Paul's conversion he had been a religious, nationalistic racist who was fueled by hatred for followers of Jesus and acted like a terrorist. After Paul's conversion he described himself in Eph 1:1 as "an apostle of Christ (King) Jesus, by the will of God", and joyfully gave himself to serve all people, especially Gentiles. What type of impact do you think this transformation had on others who had been familiar with Paul's story?

### Application

What are some of the ways in which God has made you alive?

### Prayer

Ask for God's blessing on Calvary SLO, that we would be a Church which emulates the love of God through Christ.

#### Community Group Discussion

- **Information:** Read the passage/answer the questions.
- **Transformation:** Being honest/transparent, discuss how God through the gospel intends to change you.
- **Mission:** Pray together. Surrender to God's mission.

#### Family Devotion Discussion

- **Information:** Have your child read the passage.
- **Transformation:** Make it personal. Help them to see God's love through what He's already done for them.
- **Mission:** Pray/sing together, give yourselves to God.

# EPHESIANS

FULLY ALIVE TO GOD, OTHERS & YOUR TRUE SELF

WEEK 2 EPHESIANS 1:1-2

## Introduction

The letter to the Ephesians stands as a testimony of God's life-giving purposes, beginning with the very first word in the introduction. The letter begins simply with the word, "Paul". Paul stands as one of the greatest examples of how God can take lost and dead people and make them fully alive.

## Observation/Interpretation

- Paul began this letter by referring to his credentials, "an apostle of Christ Jesus...". Why do you think he started with this?
- Read, Eph. 1:1 and Gal. 1:1. By what authority does Paul say that he has become an apostle?
- How does Paul refer to the people to whom he's writing in Eph. 1:1?
- In Paul's greeting he uses two words that are rich in meaning, "grace and peace". Grace refers to "favor", and peace refers to "setting things to right" (the opposite would be like a bone out of joint). According to Paul, what is the source of this grace and peace?

## Application

How easy/difficult is it for you to see yourself as a "saint"?

Imagine if you would. How would you live differently if you *truly* saw yourself in the way God sees you, as a highly favored saint whom God has brought into his favor and extended his peace to?

## Prayer

Ask God to help you (individually and as a community) to live in light of *who* he has remade you to *be*.

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