

A person wearing a dark hooded jacket is seen from behind, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden-orange light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The background consists of rolling hills or mountains, all rendered in soft, out-of-focus tones of orange and yellow. The entire image is framed by a thin black border.

Ephesians

Brought to Life, Brought Together

Community Group Discussion: 01.06 - 02.17

SERIES OVERVIEW

Paul's letter to the Ephesians describes to us God's mysterious plan for the church. We are brought to life and brought together for a purpose - His purpose.

"Church is the core element in the strategy of the Holy Spirit for providing human witness and physical presence to the Jesus-inaugurated kingdom of God in this world." — Eugene Peterson

MAIN TEXT

Ephesians 1:1-23

GETTING STARTED

What are your goals or hopes for 2019?

DIGGING DEEPER

For a quick refresh on what Ephesians 1 is about, watch the week one devotional video here, <https://www.redemptionin.com/ephesians>

1. Read Ephesians 1:3. What is this spiritual blessing we have been given in the heavenly realms? Do you ever wish your blessings were more in the earthly realms? Why is heavenly realms better?
2. Read Ephesians 1:4-5. We often find our identity in what we do, how we look, or how others think of us. How do you answer the question, "Who am I?" How does it feel to know that before the earth was formed, God had you in mind, He knew you and loved you?
3. Read Ephesians 1:9-12. We were chosen for greatness. This is like finding out the score of a football game before it's played — we know how this ends — we get the victory. How does this knowledge change the way we battle sin in our lives now?
4. Read Ephesians 1:13-14. The Holy Spirit is God's guarantee that He will finish what he started in you. Do you ever feel like you have to earn your standing with God? How can you begin living from your identity, instead of for your identity?

NEXT STEPS

In Ephesians 1 Paul shows us five things God is producing in our lives:

Assurance: We are adopted children of God. Not because of what we do, but because he loves us. Our identity is received not achieved.

Power: We can fight sin with confidence and know that even if today was filled with failure God promises victory tomorrow.

Humility: Because you know that you were not saved because of anything you've done. You were saved because of everything Jesus has done for you.

Hope: All things work according to God's plan. Good things, bad things, all things in life he works for his plan and our good.

Boldness: To go after the lost, and know it's not our power, knowledge, or ability that will reach them. But the Holy Spirit working in you and through you to reach other people.

Pray as a group that we would see these things produced more and more in our lives.

Read with us through the book of Ephesians using this daily Bible reading plan (see back page).

Week One: **Brought to Life, Brought Together**

Day 1: Ephesians 1:1-3

Every spiritual blessing

Day 2: Ephesians 1:4-6

Adopted by grace

Day 3: Ephesians 1:7-10

God's mysterious plan

Day 4: Ephesians 1:11-14

Live from, not for, your identity

Day 5: Ephesians 1:15-23

Spiritual wisdom