

Our Inheritance in Christ

Ephesians 1:1-14

Charles Price

Before getting into this week's study, recall this question from last week:

What are some spiritual practices that can help you grow in dependence on God? Think of a next step you can take to apply this in your life.

Ask and discuss how the previous week went in living this out...

Consider

On Sunday, Charles Price spoke about the inheritance that Christians have in Jesus Christ. It was observed that our challenge in the Christian life is not one of *possessing* the inheritance. Rather, our challenge is *knowing* that we possess it and understanding how to appropriate it.

Let's Examine

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

- After reading the text together, take some time to observe. What words are repeated? What are some key words, actions or phrases that stand out to you? *Take some time to observe individually, jot down notes and share your observations (or questions) together.*
- If you haven't already done so, notice the prevalence of the phrase "in Christ" or "through Christ". Count how many times it (or a phrase close to it) appears in these 14 verses. Discuss why you think the apostle Paul uses this phrase so heavily.
- Note the action words in this text. Who is doing the actions? When do they occur - in the past, present or future? Who are they done to?
- Focus in on verse 3. How does this verse relate to the rest of the passage? What do we learn here about the content and resources of our inheritance in Jesus Christ?

Let's Apply

Read Ephesians 1:17-23

The incredible news of our inheritance in Christ (every spiritual blessing!) is a lot to take in. Take a moment to pause and pray to thank God for what you've discussed so far about this inheritance.

- We already noted the prevalence of the phrase “in Christ”. Now think about what this emphasis means for us today. Why is it crucial that we always see the blessings of the Christian inheritance as integrally bound up in the presence of Christ himself?(leader key: the inheritance is always lived and appropriated in relationship with the living Christ. Discuss the implications of this truth.)
- In Ephesians 1:17-23, what is Paul’s main desire that he prays for the church in Ephesus (and for us)?
- In the Bible, *knowing* and the *knowledge of God* is a deep and holistic idea. While it includes what we might call “head knowledge”, it is so much more. It refers to a relational, experiential, whole-person type of knowing. This said, how are you positioning yourself to keep growing in knowing Christ? Is there a next step you can take to this end?
- Coming back to Ephesians 1:17-23, what role does the community of the church (“his holy people”, “his body”) have in our knowing of Jesus and our experience of this inheritance in Christ? Why is it crucial that we embrace the community of the church?
- If you are a Christian, what might be preventing you from appropriating the inheritance you already have and resting in the sufficiency of Christ? How does the good news of what *God has done* (not what *you must do*) free you to rest in Christ?
- How might your life look different if you started to live as if this inheritance were really yours? Consider how this might impact how you approach your engagement with church, your relationships, your work, and your decisions, goals and lifestyle.

Let’s Pray

- Pause and quietly consider what the Holy Spirit is saying to you from your time.
- Rejoice and thank God for the inheritance that is already yours in Christ.
- Ask that the Holy Spirit would enable you to rest in the sufficiency of Christ and enjoy the full blessing of his life in you.
- Ask that the Holy Spirit would purify you of any hardness, resistance, or sin that keeps you from entering fully into your inheritance in Christ.
- Yield to God’s will for you to enter into the fullness of his riches in Christ.
- Pray for any needs, request, or praises brought up for the group.

Holy Spirit, empower us with the love of the Father to join Jesus in his mission. Grow us as your body for your global mission. Through Christ we pray. Amen.